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THE OBLONG BOX

EDGAR ALLEN POE

A WEIRD, HARROWING
ADVENTURE OFF STORMY
CAPE HATTERAS AS TOLD
BY THE GRAND MASTER
OF MYSTERY FICTION!
--- WHAT NAMELESS
DREAD HAUNTED THIS
ARTIST WHO BROUGHT
THE OBLONG BOX
ABOARD THE
"INDEPENDENCE"?
CAPTAIN HARDY KNEW
ITS GRIM SECRET
BUT DARED NOT TELL
A SOUL!

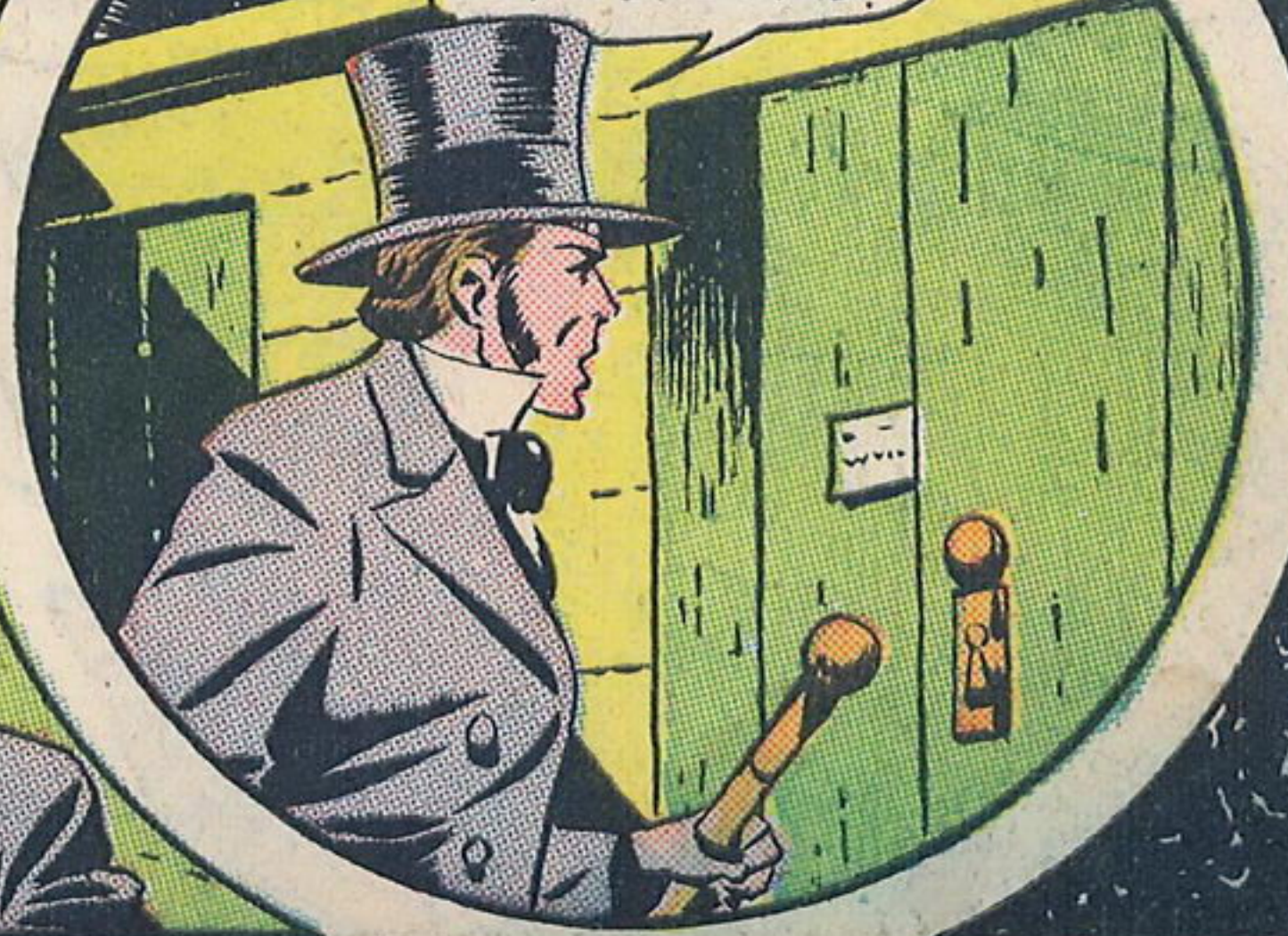


THIS STRANGE TALE BEGAN IN CHARLESTON,
SOUTH CAROLINA, IN THE YEAR 1840---

YES, MR. POE, WE
SAIL FOR NEW
YORK TOMORROW!

FINE, CAPTAIN HARDY...
I'LL GO ABOARD AND
ARRANGE MY
STATEROOM!

THAT'S ODD--
WHY HAS MY ARTIST
FRIEND, WYATT,
ENGAGED THREE
STATEROOMS?



WYATT, HIS BEAUTIFUL YOUNG BRIDE, AND HIS TWO SISTERS... BUT EACH HAS TWO BERTHS! WHY A THIRD STATEROOM?



CORNELIUS WYATT, ESQ

AH, WYATT! GOOD DAY, SIR... I'M ANXIOUS TO MEET YOUR BRIDE!

ER, MRS. WYATT IS ILL TODAY, BUT SHE'LL BE ABOARD TOMORROW!



THE NEXT DAY, AS POE LEFT HIS HOTEL...

SORRY, MR. POE, WE AREN'T SAILING TODAY!

HUH?... BUT THE WEATHER IS IDEAL, CAP'N. WHAT'S WRONG?



CAN'T MENTION IT, MR. POE. WE'LL SAIL IN A DAY OR TWO!

WELL, OF COURSE IF YOU'D RATHER NOT! BUT IT SEEMS RATHER STRANGE!



NEARLY A WEEK PASSED BEFORE THE "INDEPENDENCE" WAS READY TO SAIL...

HMM... WYATT'S PARTY IS ABOARD... THERE'LL BE TROUBLE ABOARD THIS VOYAGE!

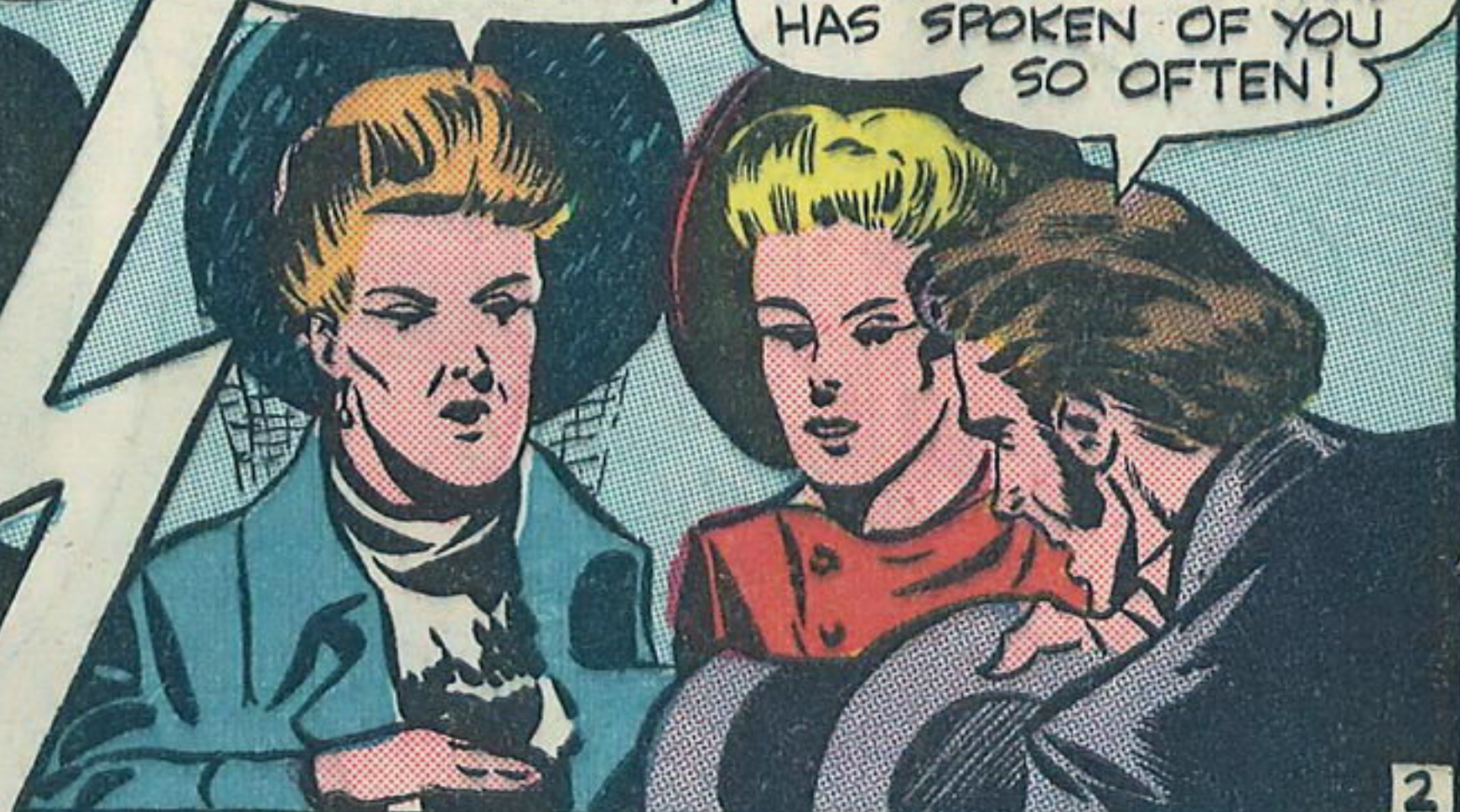
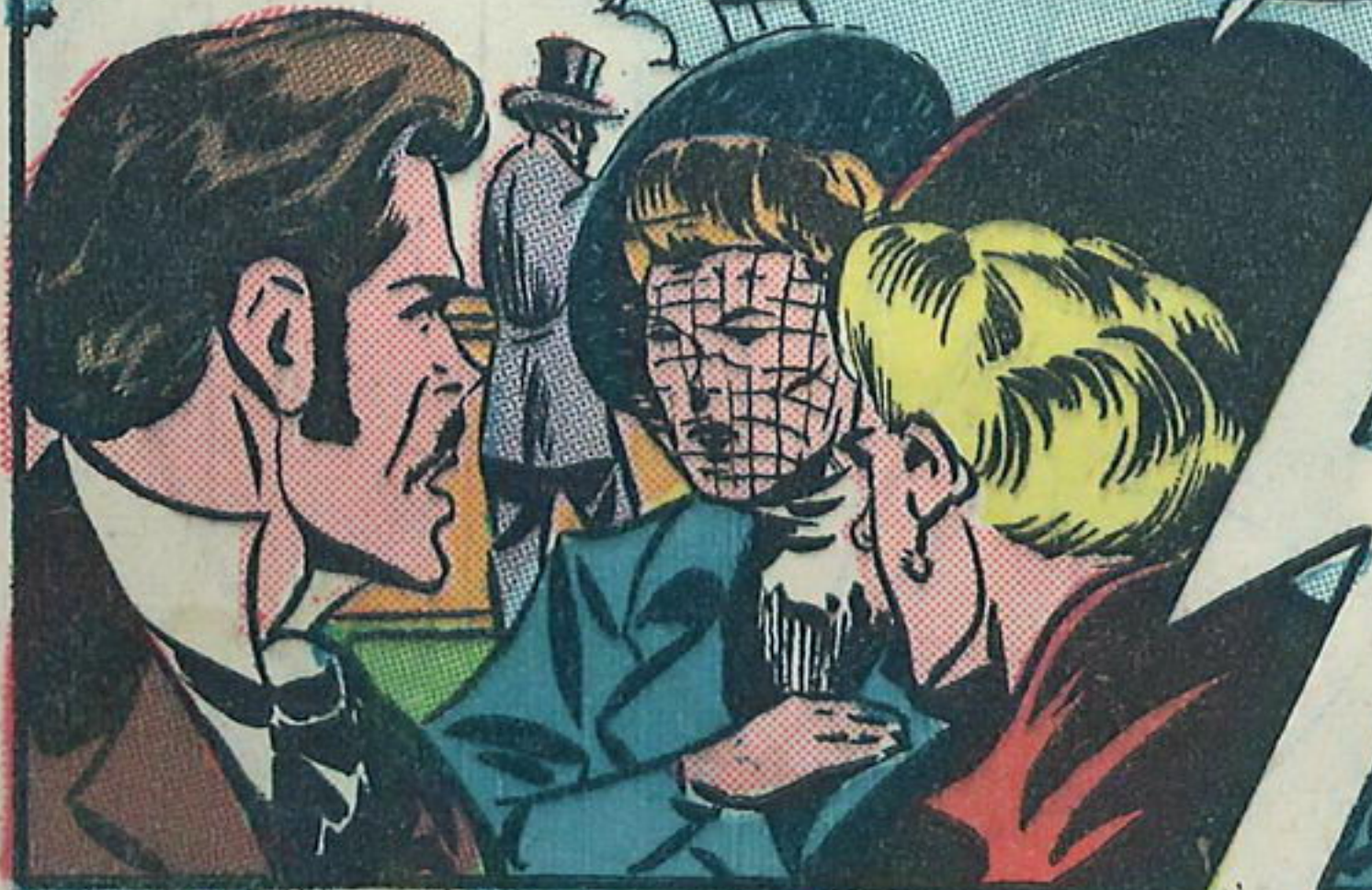


POE IS ANXIOUS TO MEET MY WIFE... WILL YOU INTRODUCE HER TO HIM, MARIAM?

WHY, ER--YES OF COURSE!

HOW DO YOU DO, MR. POE!

CHARMED TO MEET YOU, MADAM... YOUR HUSBAND HAS SPOKEN OF YOU SO OFTEN!



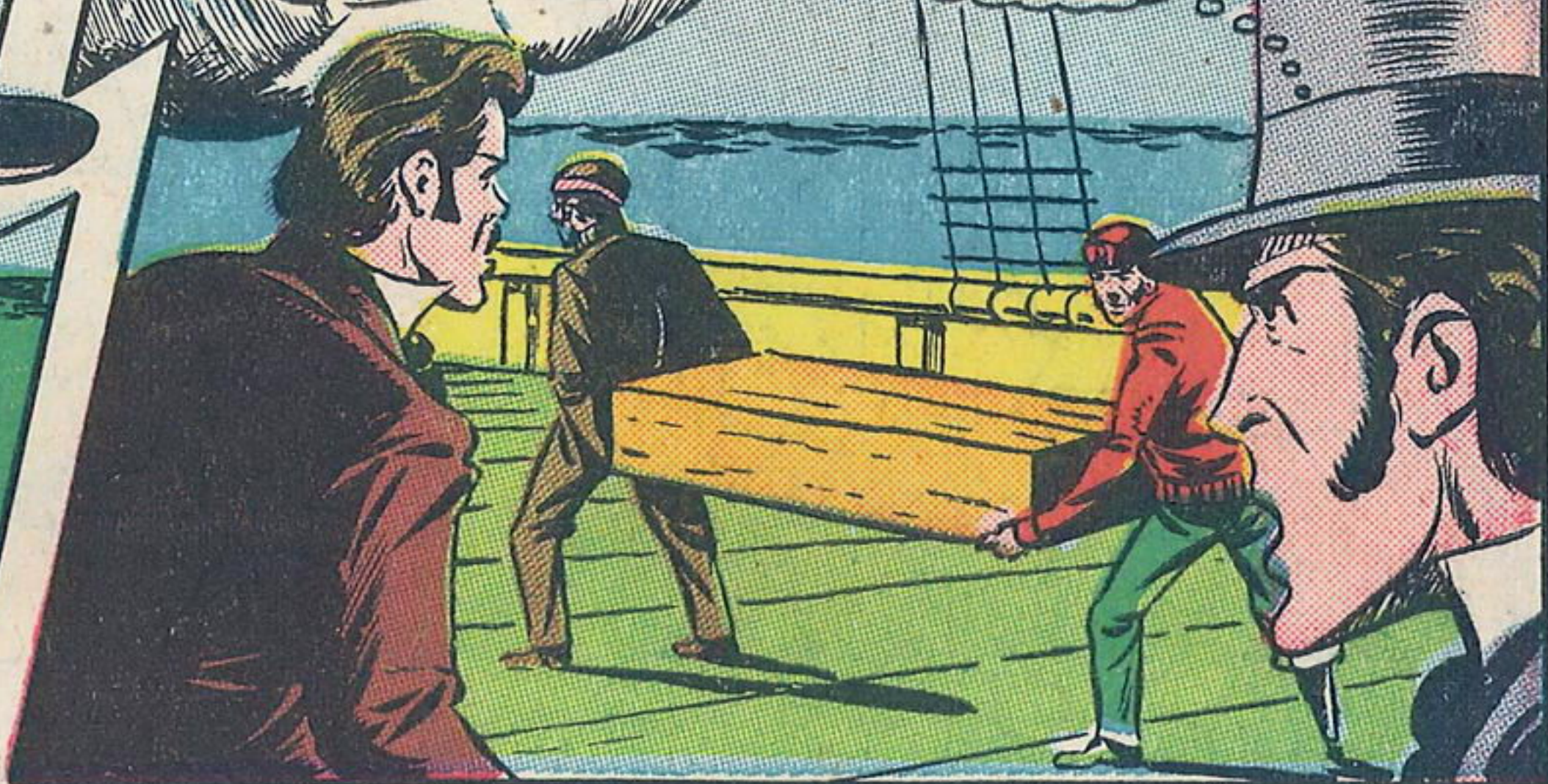
EERIE FOREBODINGS OF EVIL
STIRRED IN POE'S BRAIN....

GOOD HEAVENS! CAN SHE BE
WYATT'S BRIDE? THE ARTIST
IN HIM IMAGINES HER
BEAUTIFUL!...NO, I FEAR
ALL'S NOT WELL....

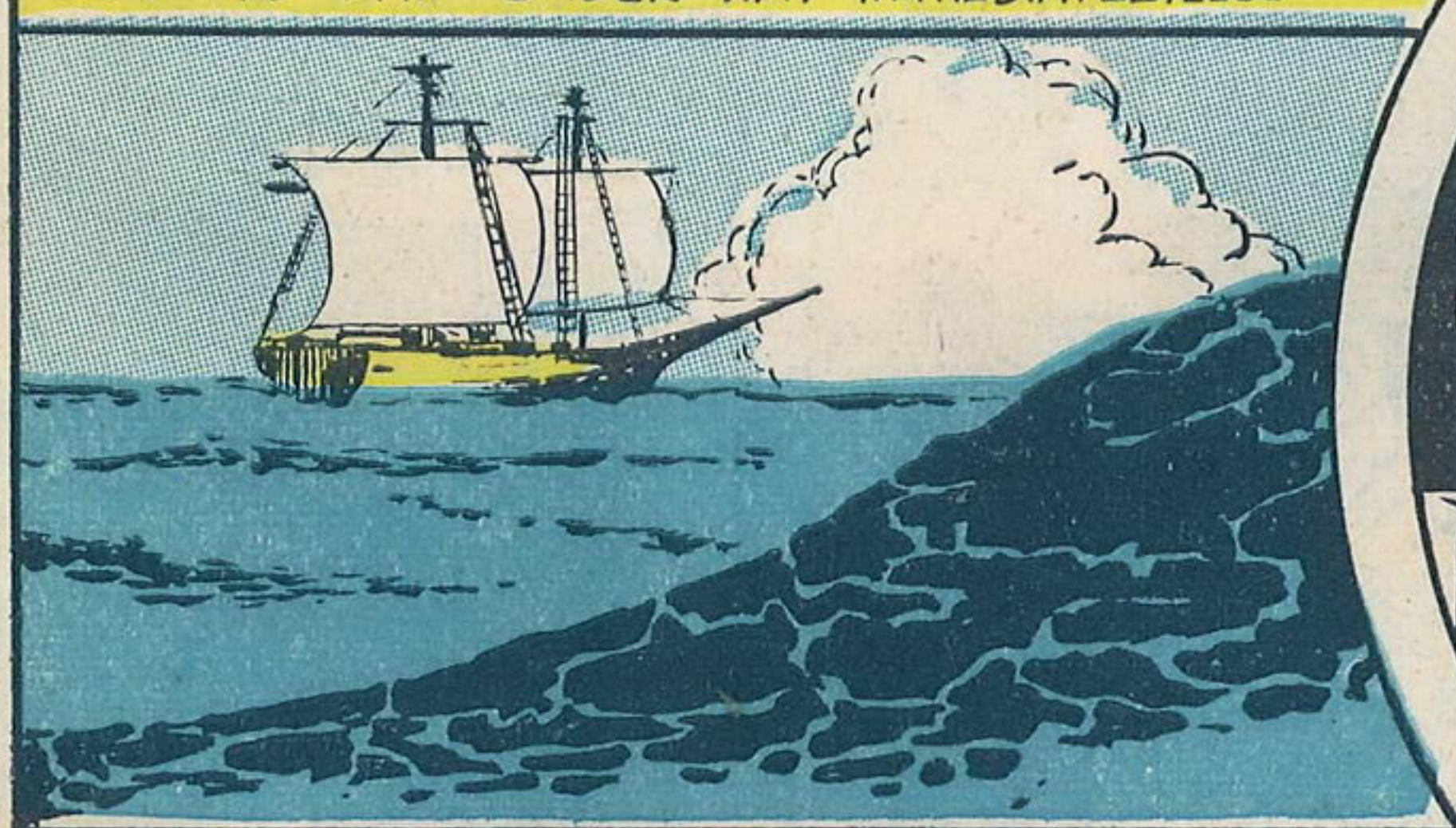
AND HIS DREAD IS DOUBLED AS WYATT'S BAGGAGE
CAME ABOARD....

STOW THE BOX
IN MY STATEROOM,
MEN!

WHAT COULD THAT CONTAIN?
HIS PAINTING? WYATT'S
ACT IS MOST
PECULIAR!



WITH THE OBLONG BOX ABOARD, CAPTAIN HARDY
GOT HIS SHIP UNDER WAY IMMEDIATELY....



LATE, THAT EVENING--

SO FAR...WE'VE
AROUSED NO
SUSPICION!

YES, GOOD
NIGHT, MR.
WYATT!



THE MYSTERY DEEPENS!
HIS WIFE CALLS HIM MR.
WYATT AND OCCUPIES THE
THIRD STATEROOM ALONE!
I WONDER WHY HE DIDN'T
STOW THE OBLONG BOX
WITH THE CARGO?



IN THE DEAD OF THE
NIGHT, POE WAS AWAKENED
BY QUEER SOUNDS...

GOOD HEAVENS! WYATT'S
PRYING OPEN THE
OBLONG BOX IN HIS
STATEROOM!



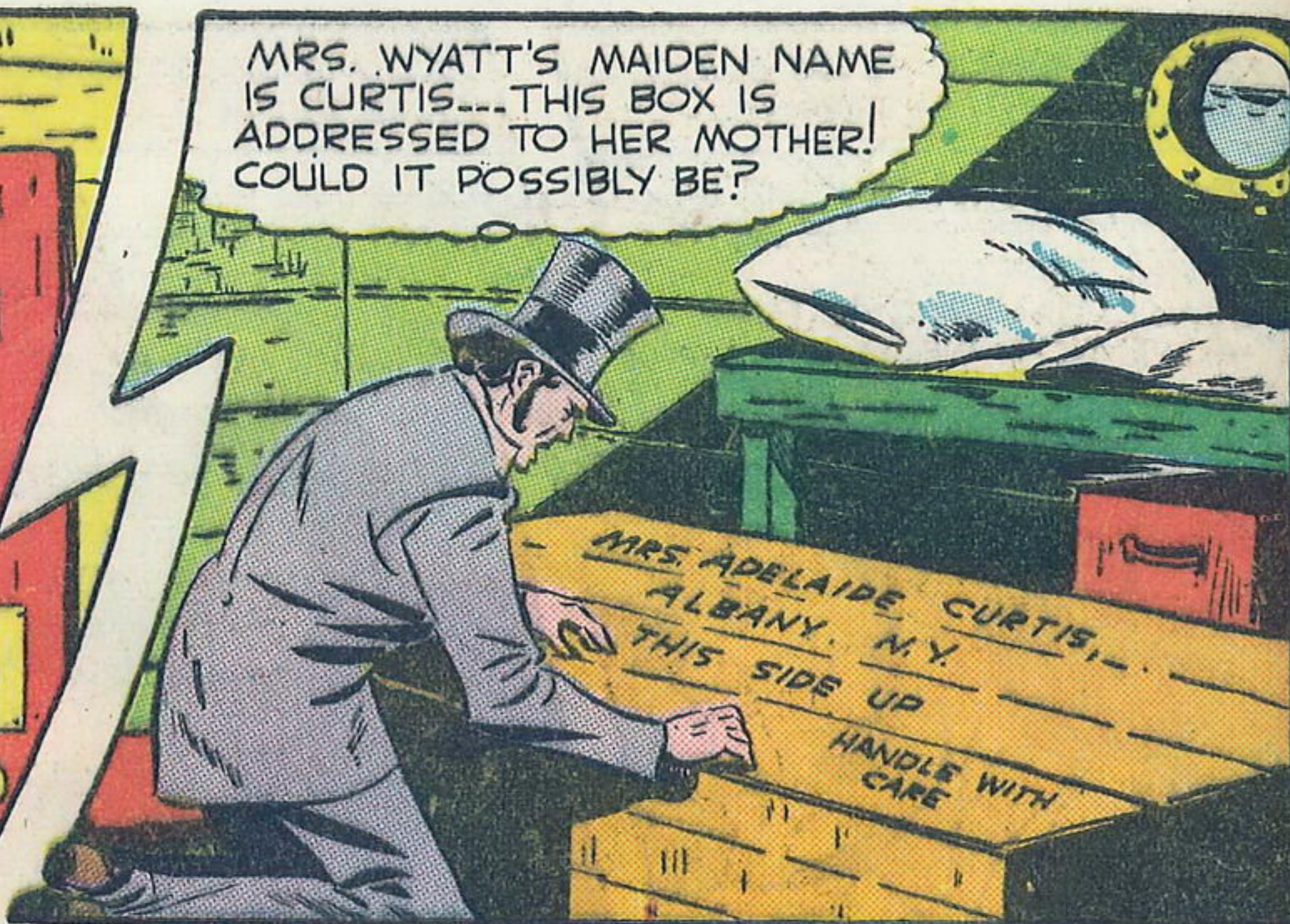
GRUESOME NIGHTMARES
TORTURED POE'S SLEEP
TILL DAYBREAK....

WYATT'S SURELY MAD
NOW... HE'S NAILING
DOWN THE BOX WITH
A MUFFLED Mallet...
I MUST LEARN WHAT'S
CONCEALED IN IT!





NOW'S MY CHANCE
WHILE THEY'RE AT
BREAKFAST...AH, THIS
KEY FITS!

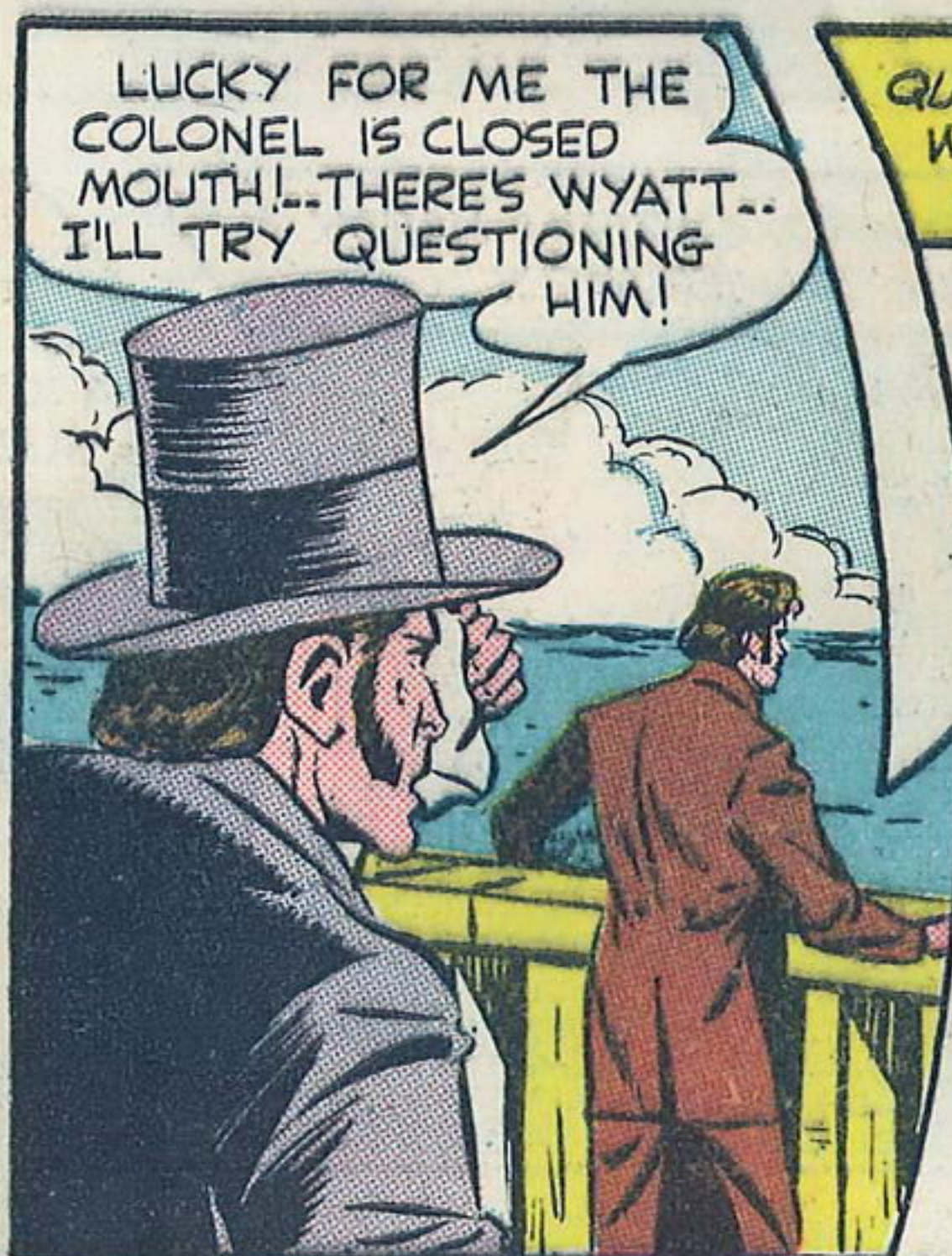


MRS. WYATT'S MAIDEN NAME
IS CURTIS...THIS BOX IS
ADDRESSED TO HER MOTHER!
COULD IT POSSIBLY BE?



ER...AHEM! GOOD MORNING,
POE!

UH, OH,
HELLO,
COLONEL, I'M
FASTENING
THIS AT WYATT'S
REQUEST!

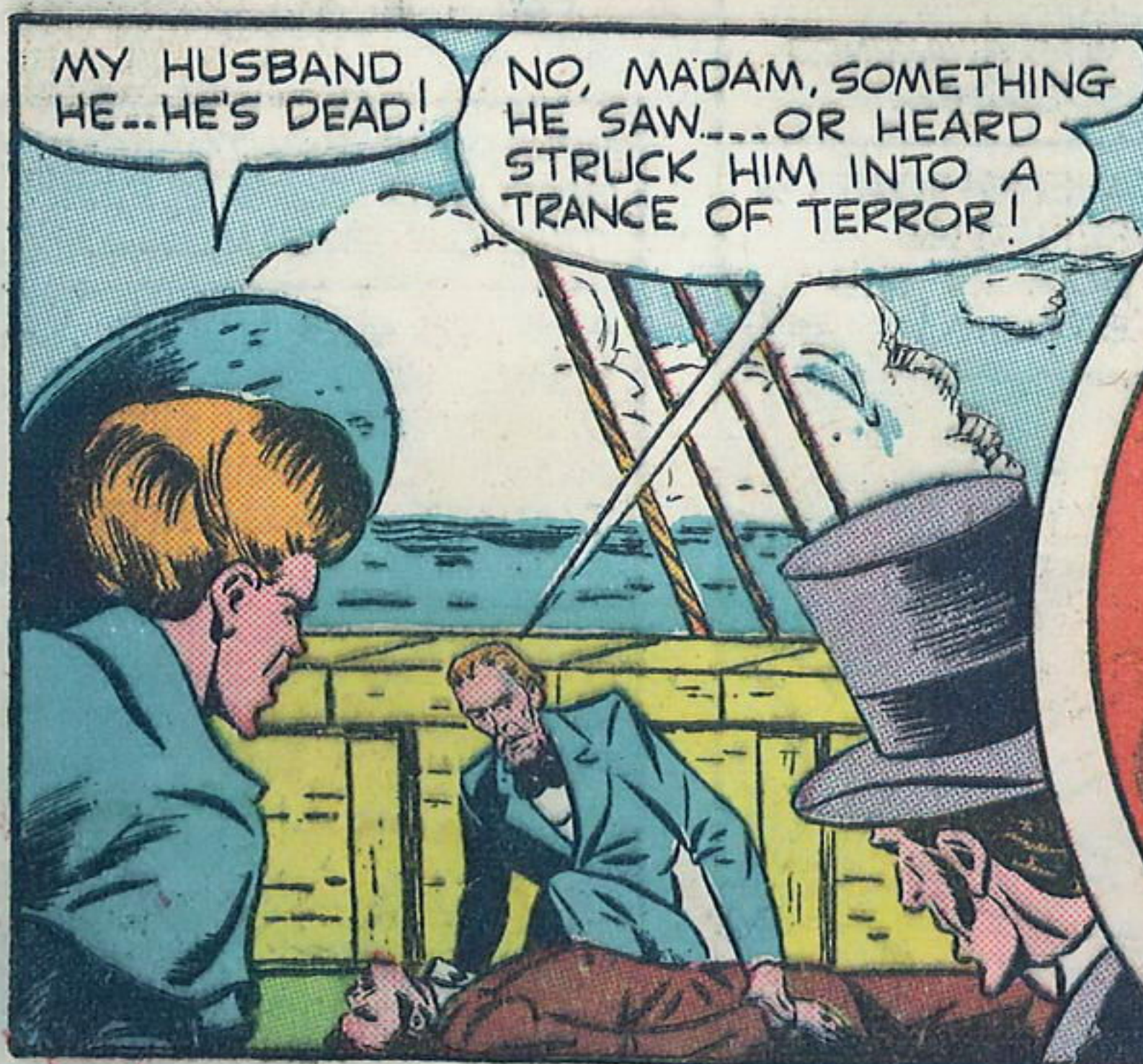


LUCKY FOR ME THE
COLONEL IS CLOSED
MOUTH!...THERE'S WYATT..
I'LL TRY QUESTIONING
HIM!



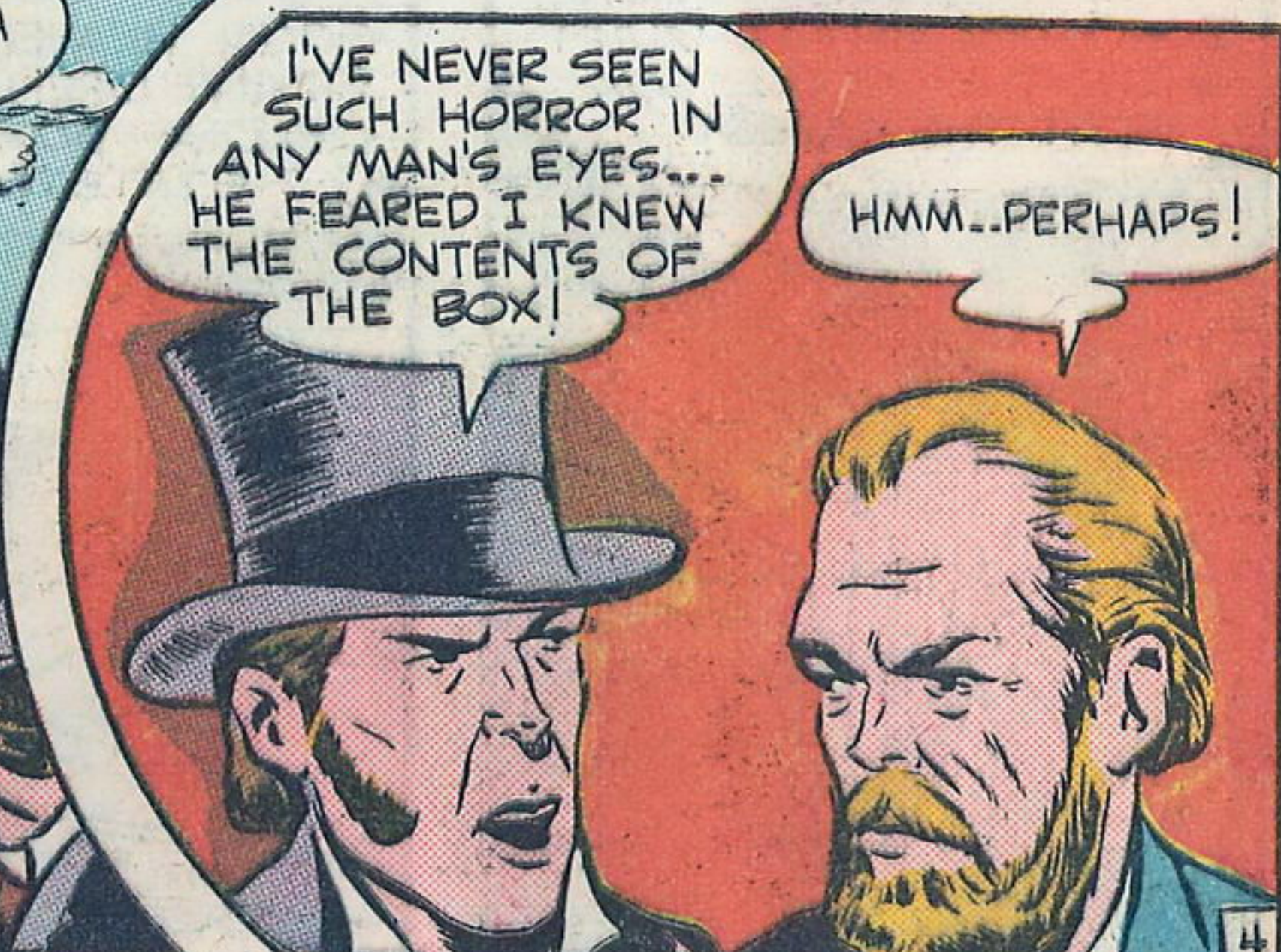
QUESTIONED ABOUT THE BOX,
WYATT PALED SUDDENLY AND
COLLAPSED...

GOOD HEAVENS, MAN! I
DIDN'T MEAN TO SHOCK
YOU...HERE, SOMEONE
LEND A HAND!



MY HUSBAND
HE...HE'S DEAD!

NO, MADAM, SOMETHING
HE SAW...OR HEARD
STRUCK HIM INTO A
TRANCE OF TERROR!



I'VE NEVER SEEN
SUCH HORROR IN
ANY MAN'S EYES...
HE FEARED I KNEW
THE CONTENTS OF
THE BOX!

HMM...PERHAPS!

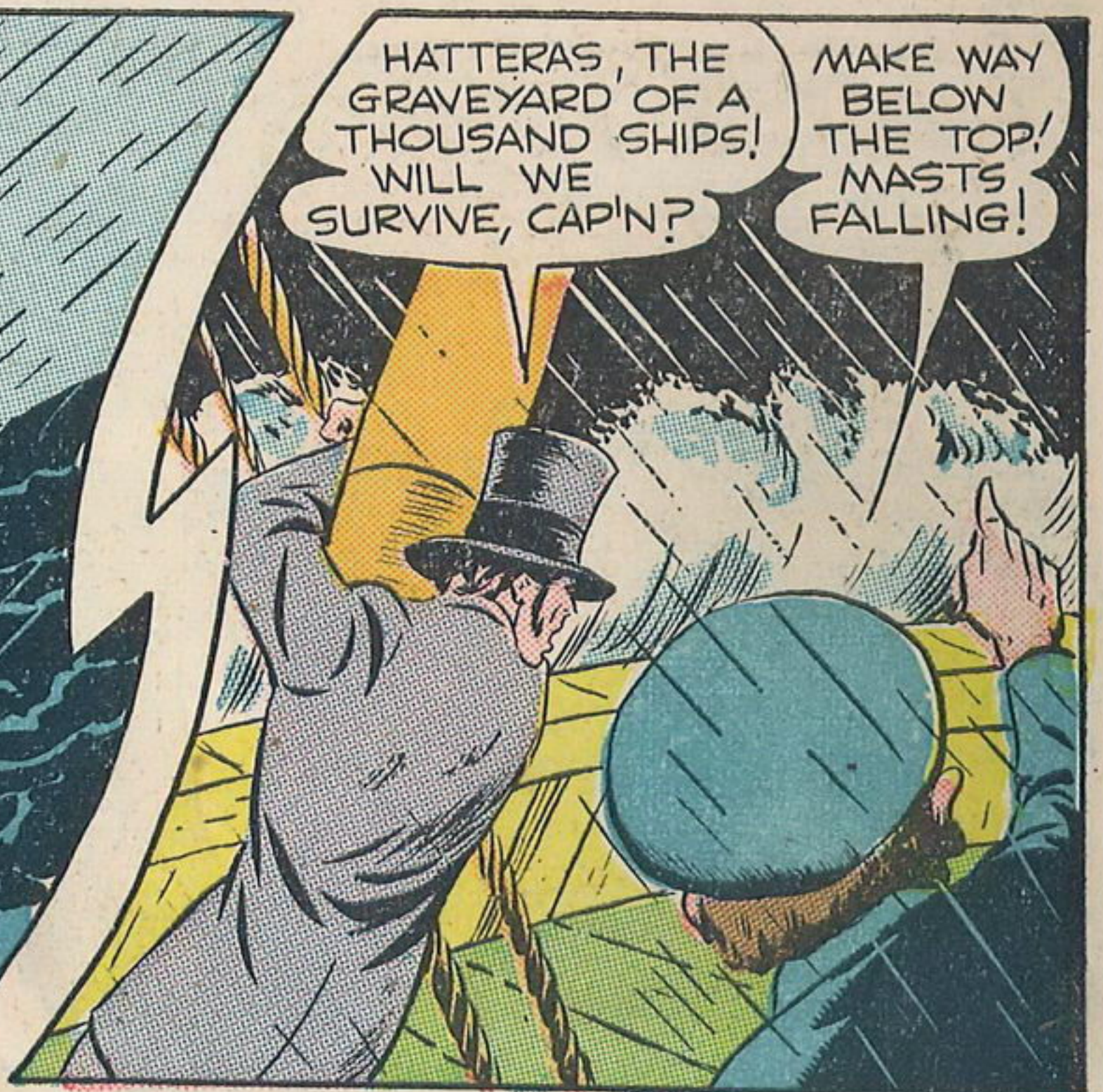
NEARING CAPE HATTERAS, THE SHIP
RAN INTO A HOWLING GALE---

ALL HANDS MAN
THE PUMPS!



HATTERAS, THE
GRAVEYARD OF A
THOUSAND SHIPS!
WILL WE
SURVIVE, CAPTAIN?

MAKE WAY
BELOW
THE TOP!
MASTS
FALLING!



WHAT'S THAT? YOU
FEARED WHAT WOULD
JINX THIS VOYAGE?

ALL HANDS
ON DECK!
LOWER THE
BOATS!



ABANDON
SHIP!

GOOD LORD,
WE'LL ALL BE
DROWNED!



NO, WAIT! WE MUST
GO BACK FOR THE
OBLONG BOX!

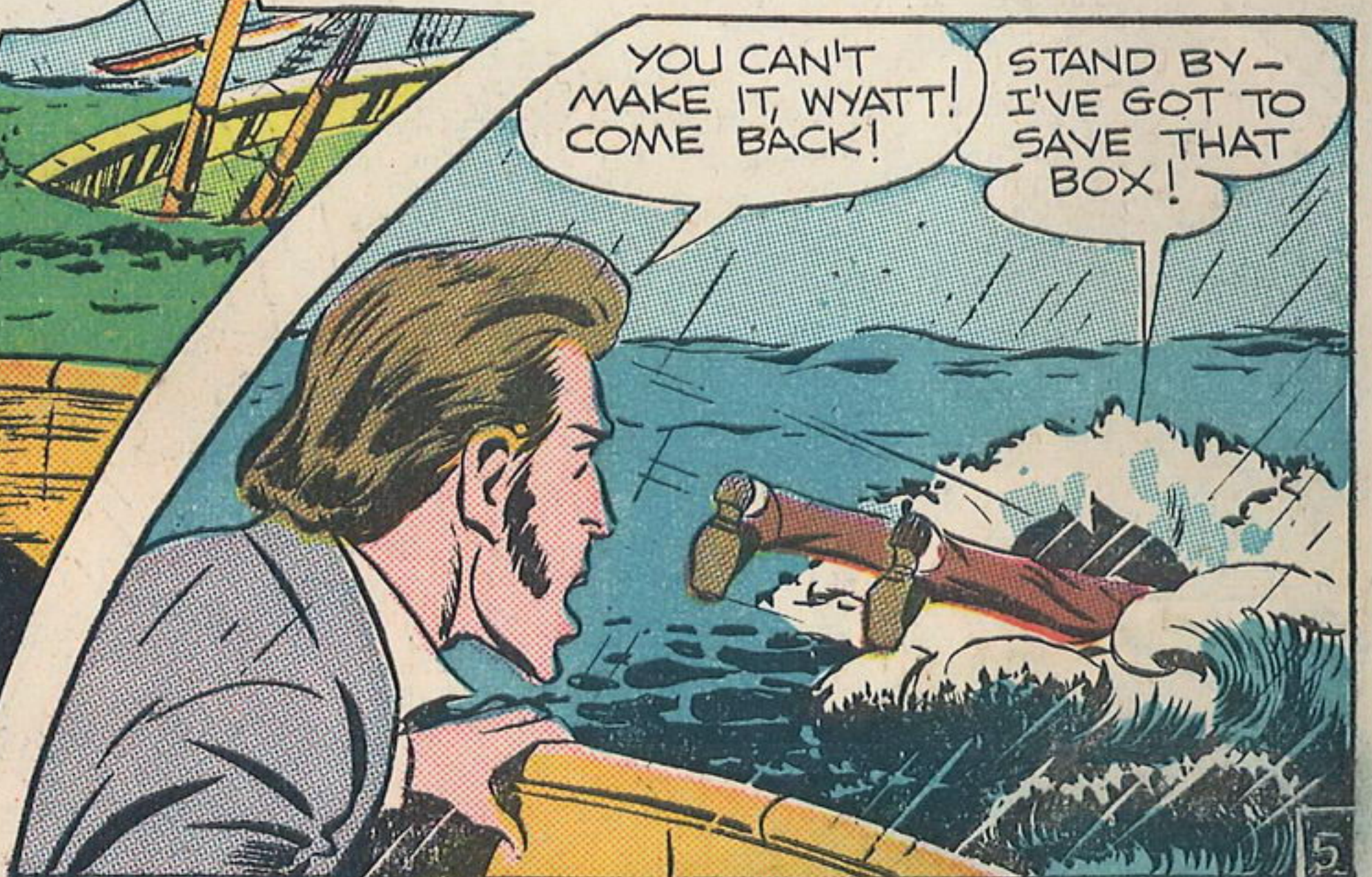
WYATT! ARE
YOU MAD?

WE CAN'T
DO IT, SIR!



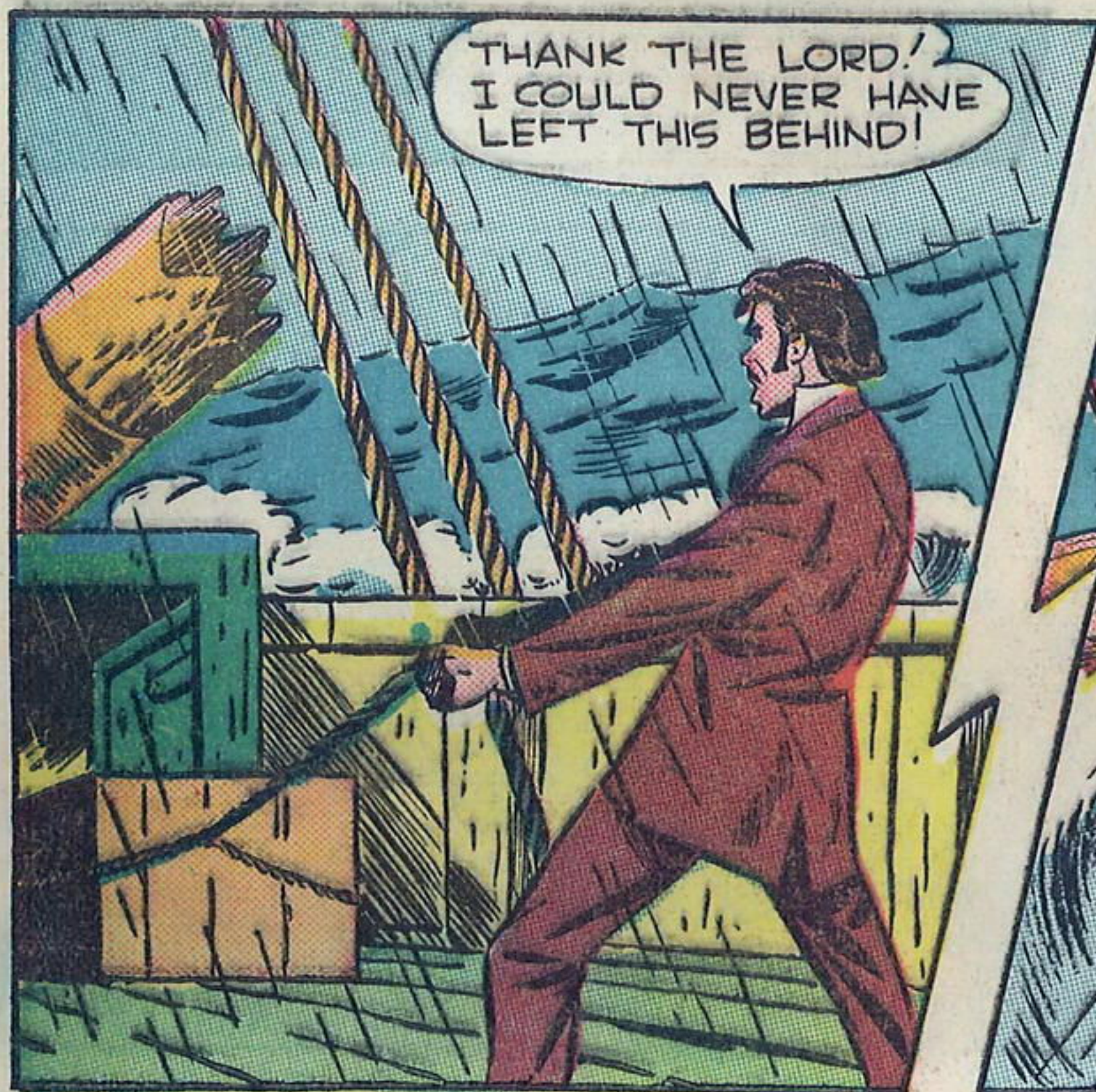
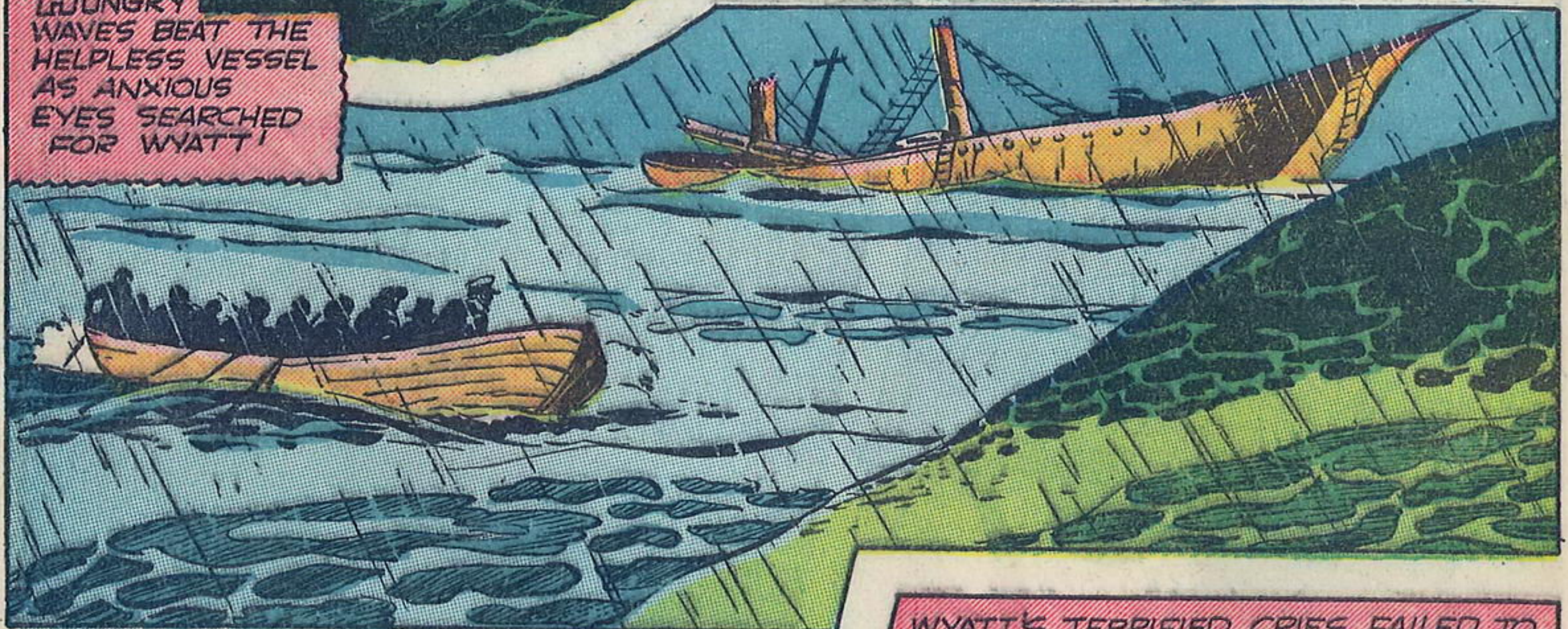
YOU CAN'T
MAKE IT, WYATT!
COME BACK!

STAND BY—
I'VE GOT TO
SAVE THAT
BOX!





HUNGRY WAVES BEAT THE HELPLESS VESSEL AS ANXIOUS EYES SEARCHED FOR WYATT!





THEY LEFT ME TO DROWN!
BUT WE CANNOT BE
PARTED, EVEN IN
DEATH!



TO THE BOTTOM
OF THE SEA—
TOGETHER!



THE ROPE AROUND
HIM WAS TIED TO
THE BOX! HIS
BODY WILL NEVER
BE WASHED
ASHORE!

NO! THEY'LL
SOON RISE—
BUT NOT
UNTIL THE
SALT MELTS!



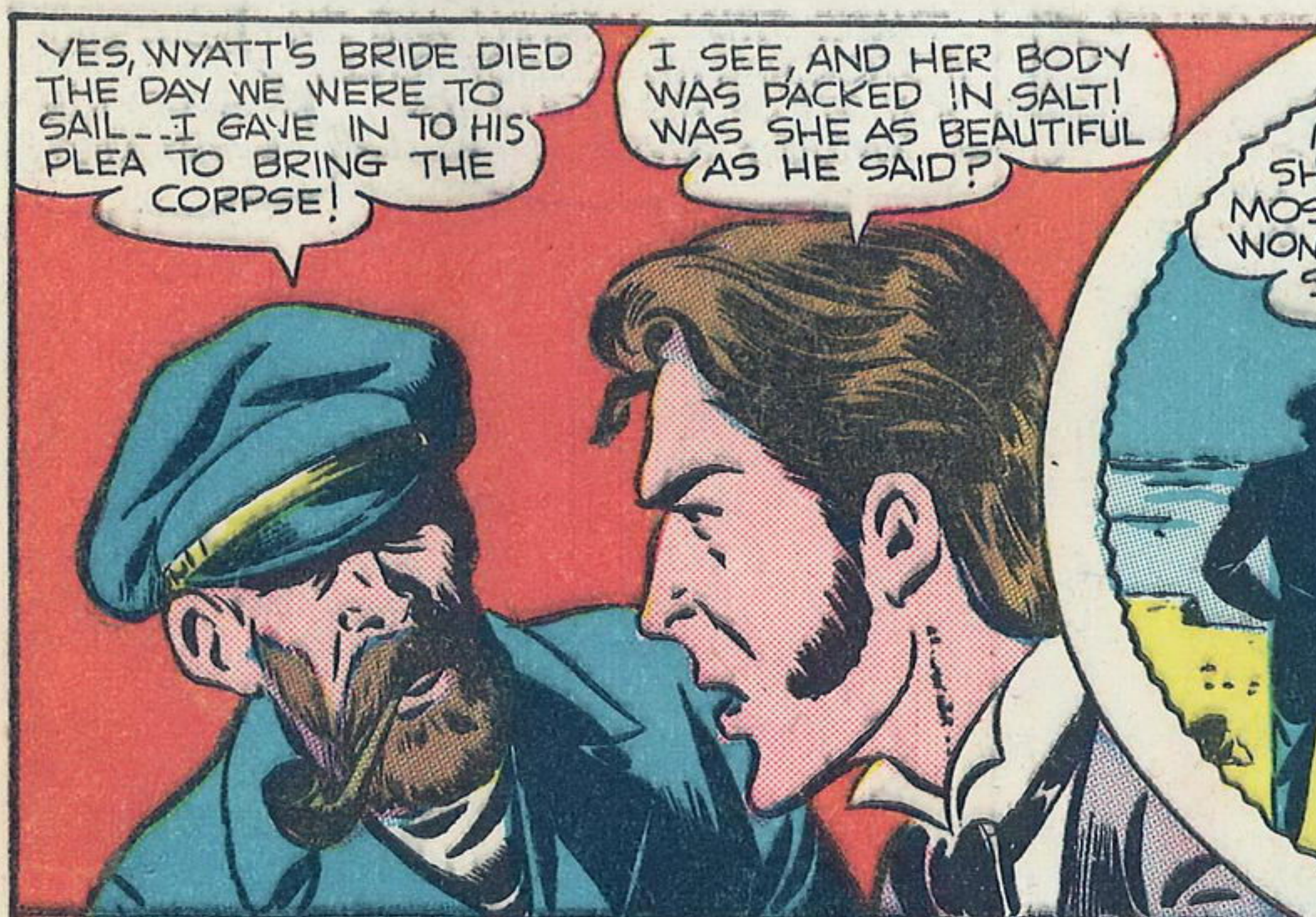
SO, YOU'RE
NOT WYATT'S
WIFE?

SHHH!
DON'T LET
THE OTHERS
HEAR...THEY
WOULD NOT HAVE
TAKEN USHAD THEY
KNOWN!



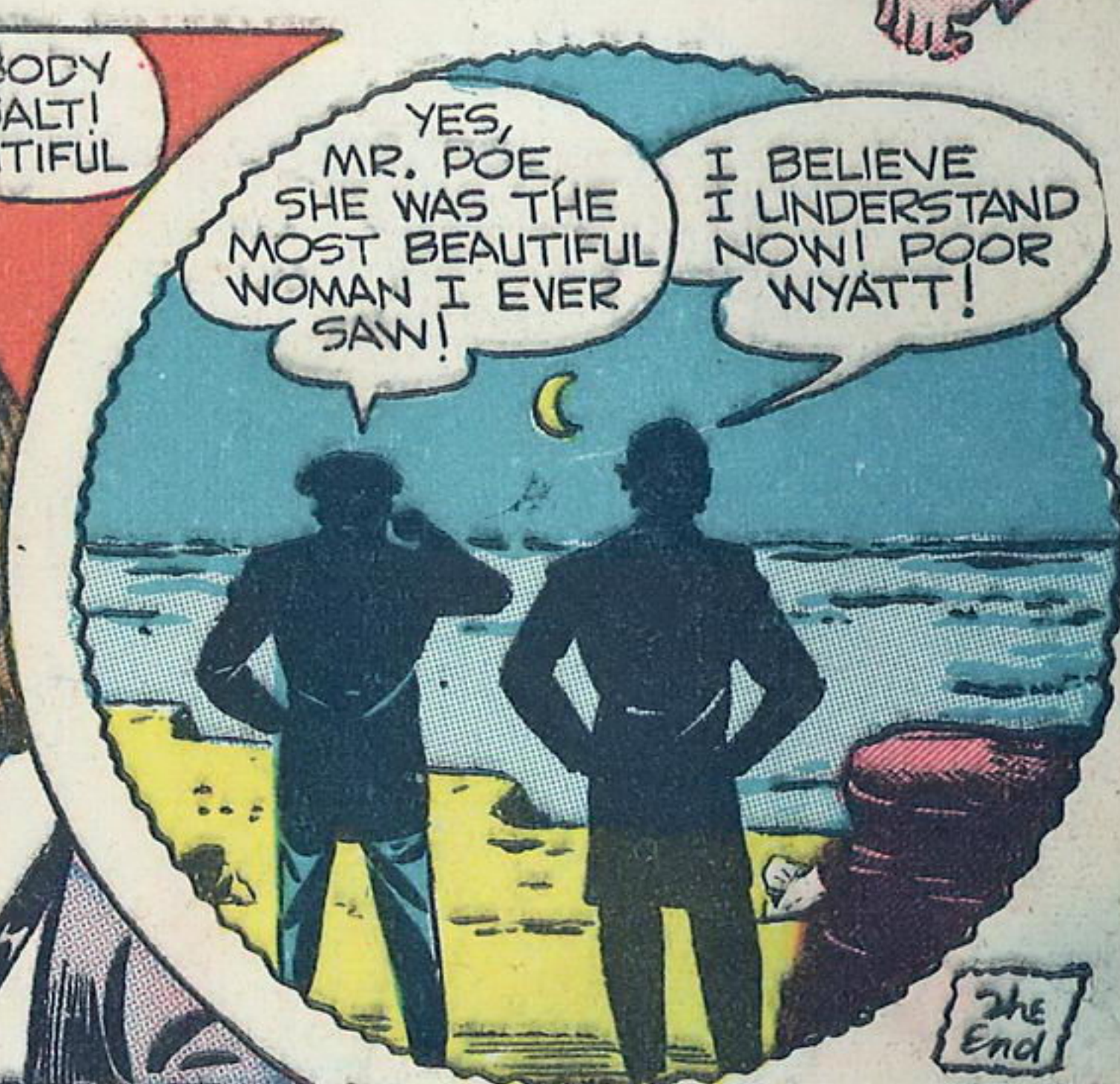
ALL SAFELY
ASHORE...!
THANK GOD!

CAPTAIN
HARDY—
I'LL HAVE
A WORD
WITH
YOU!



YES, WYATT'S BRIDE DIED
THE DAY WE WERE TO
SAIL...I GAVE IN TO HIS
PLEA TO BRING THE
CORPSE!

I SEE, AND HER BODY
WAS PACKED IN SALT!
WAS SHE AS BEAUTIFUL
AS HE SAID?



YES,
MR. POE,
SHE WAS THE
MOST BEAUTIFUL
WOMAN I EVER
SAW!

I BELIEVE
I UNDERSTAND
NOW! POOR
WYATT!

The
End

MASTER MARVIN

"MAWSTER MARVIN—
RIVERS IS CALLING YOU!
OH-OH— HERE COMES
MARVIN AND IS HE IN
TROUBLE AGAIN."

PRIVATE
KEPE OUT

OFFICE

FAGALY
KAPITAN

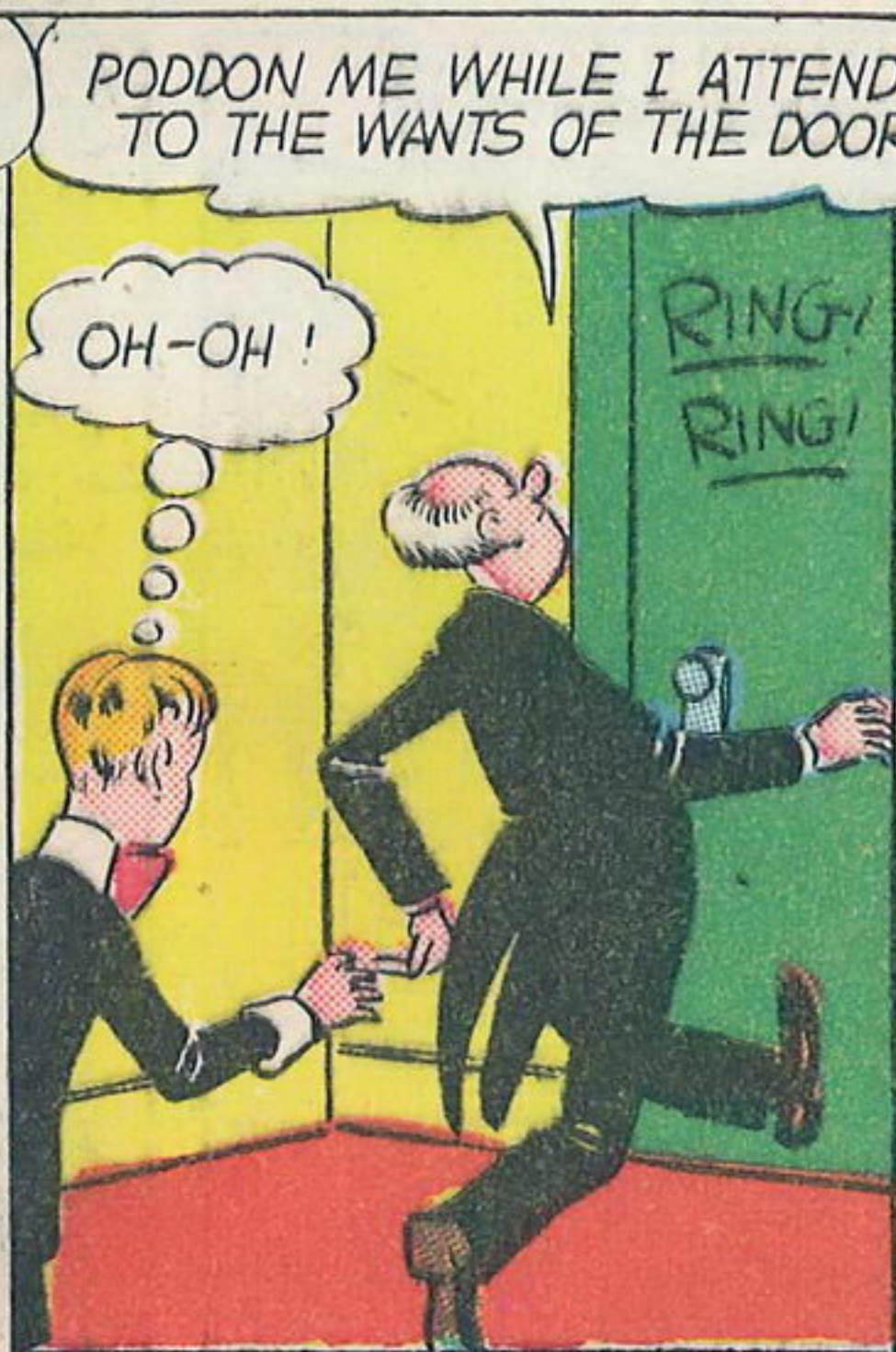
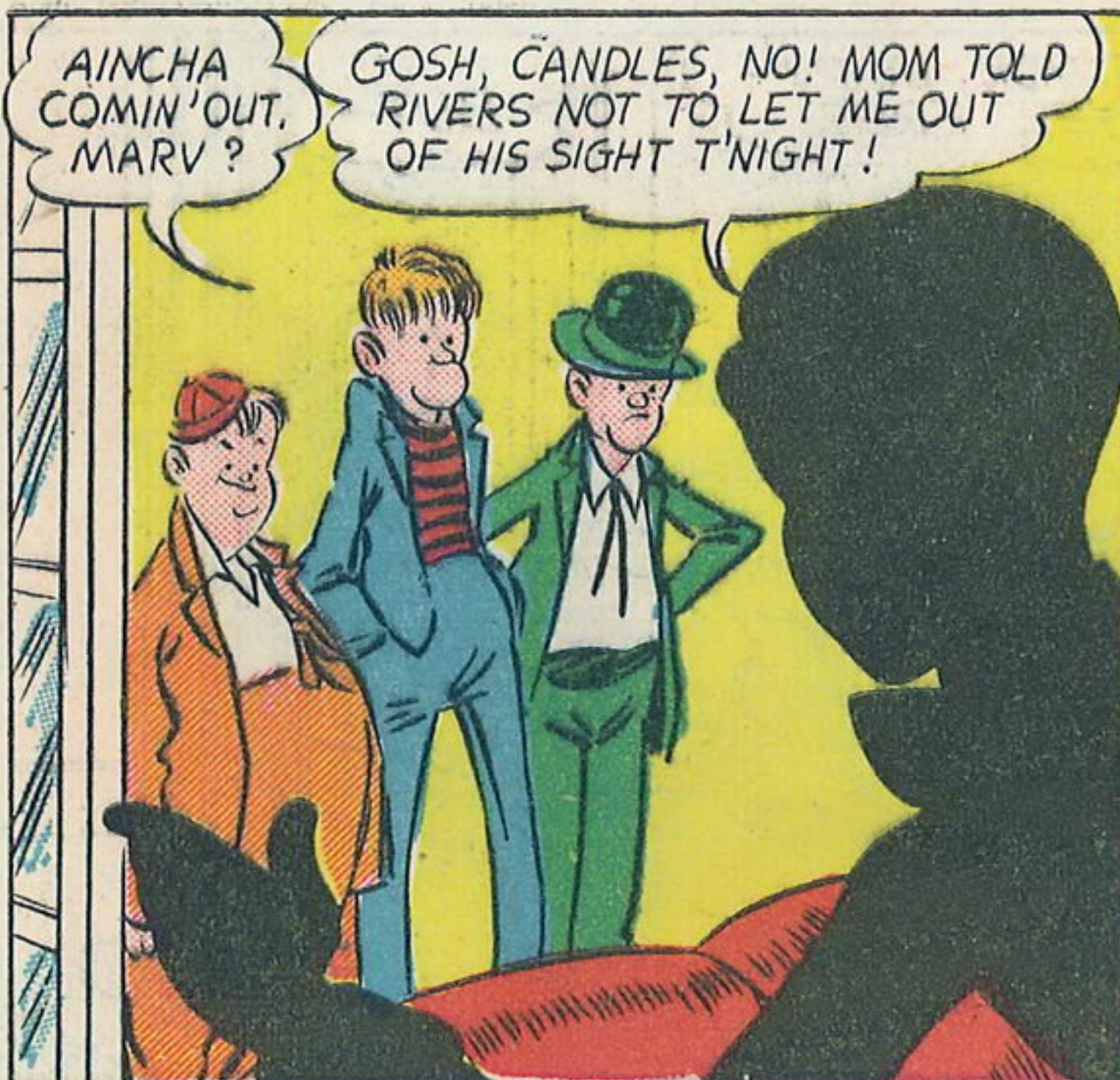
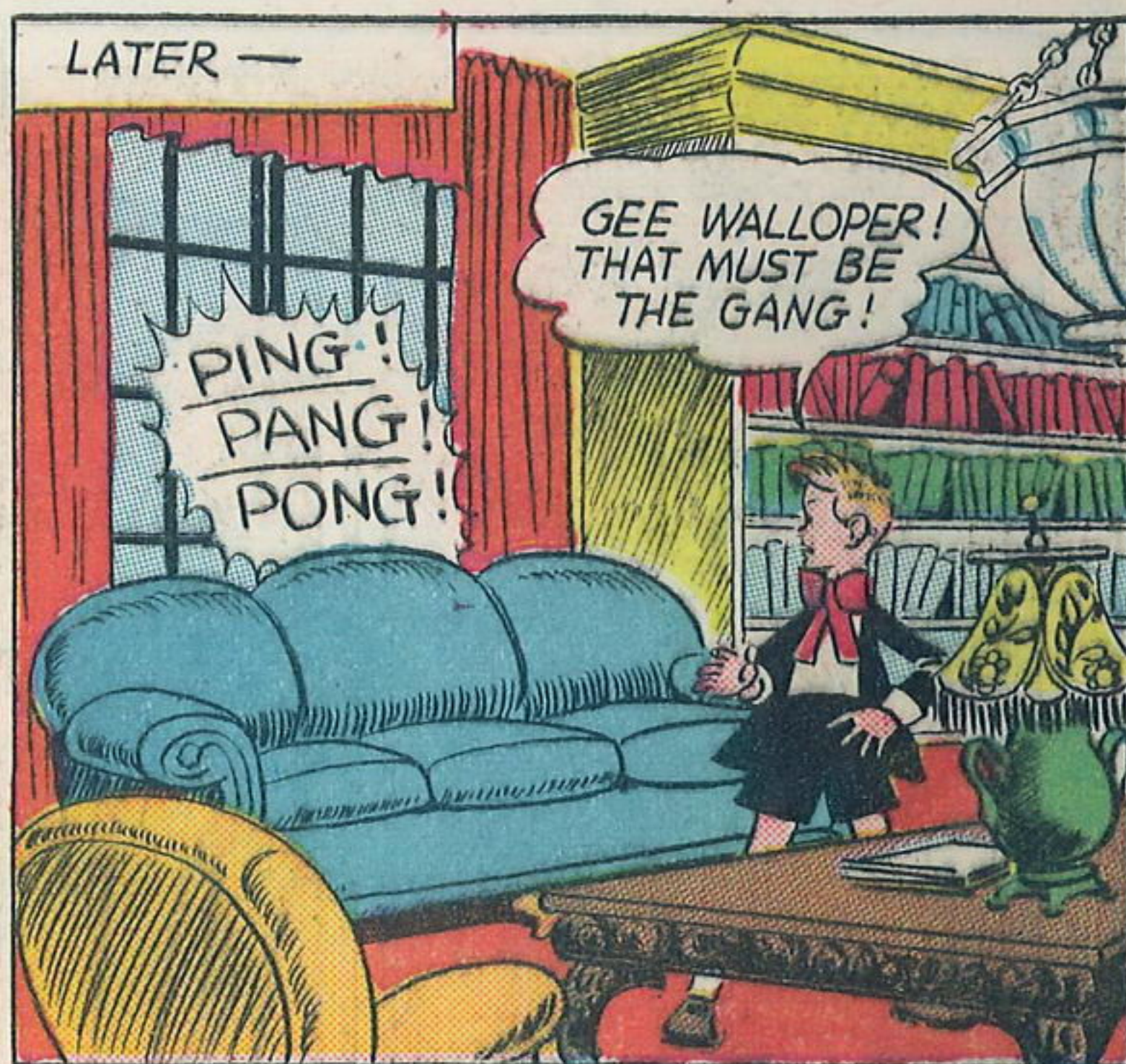
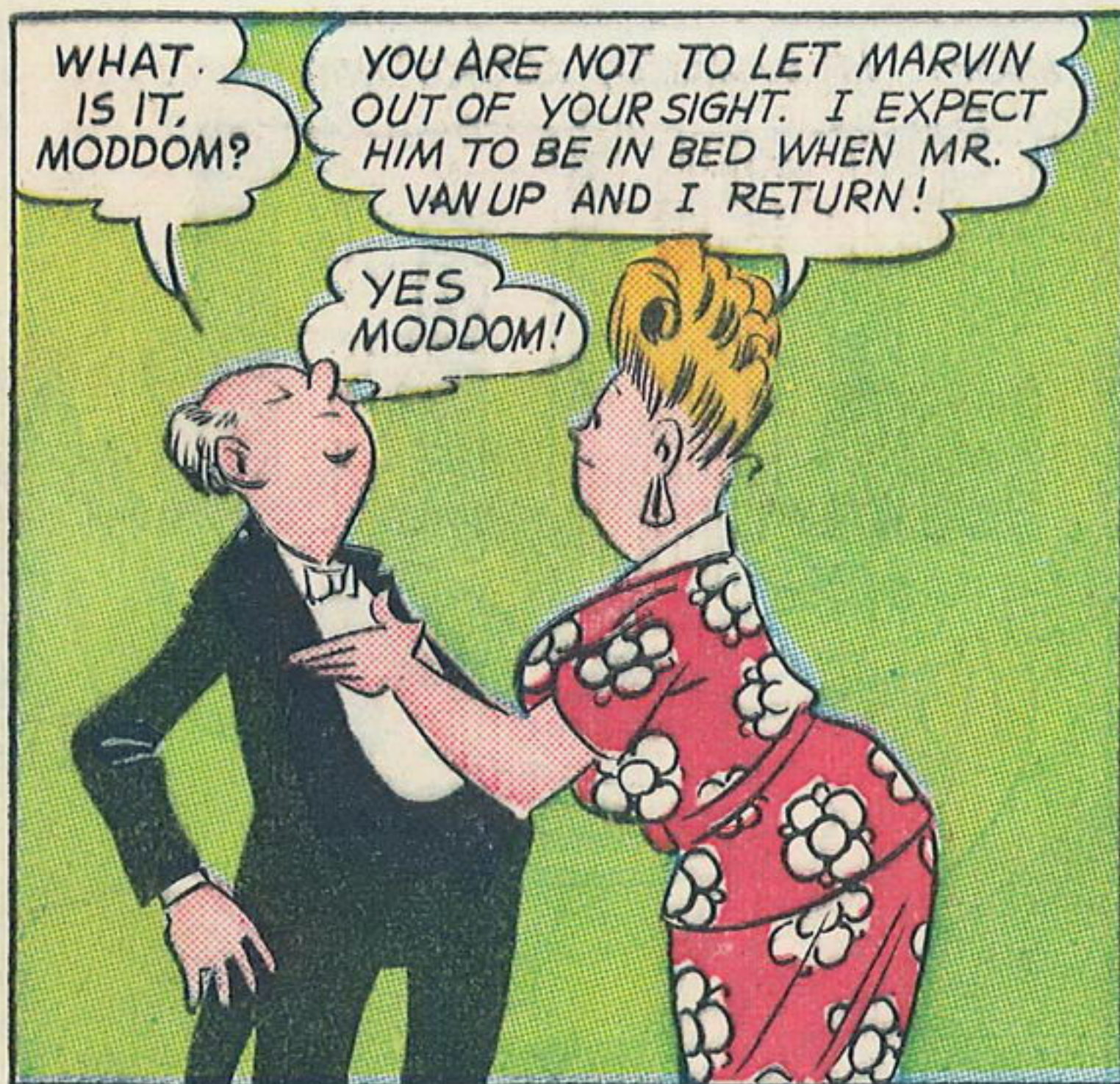
AT THE VAN-
UP MANSION
ONE
EVENING!

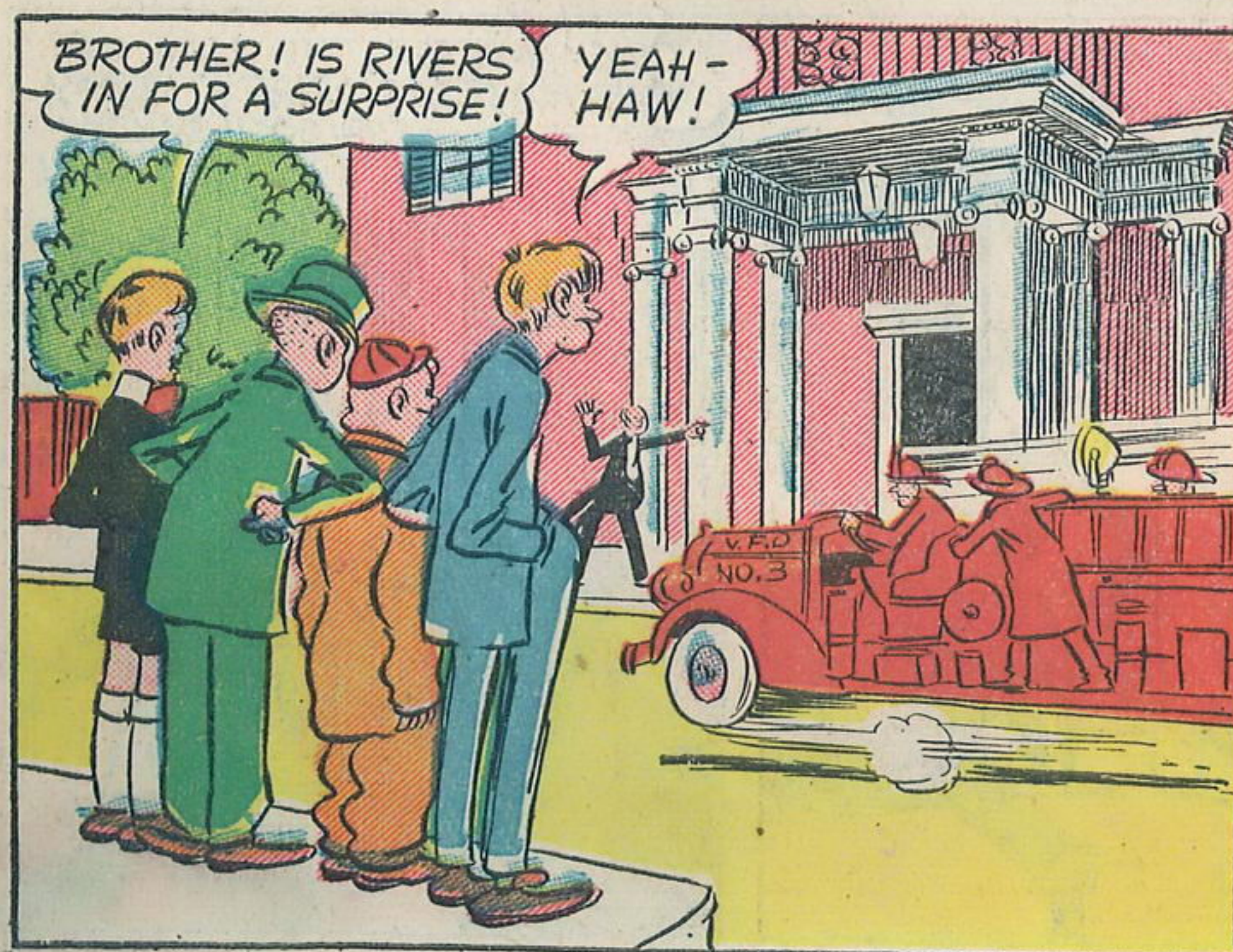
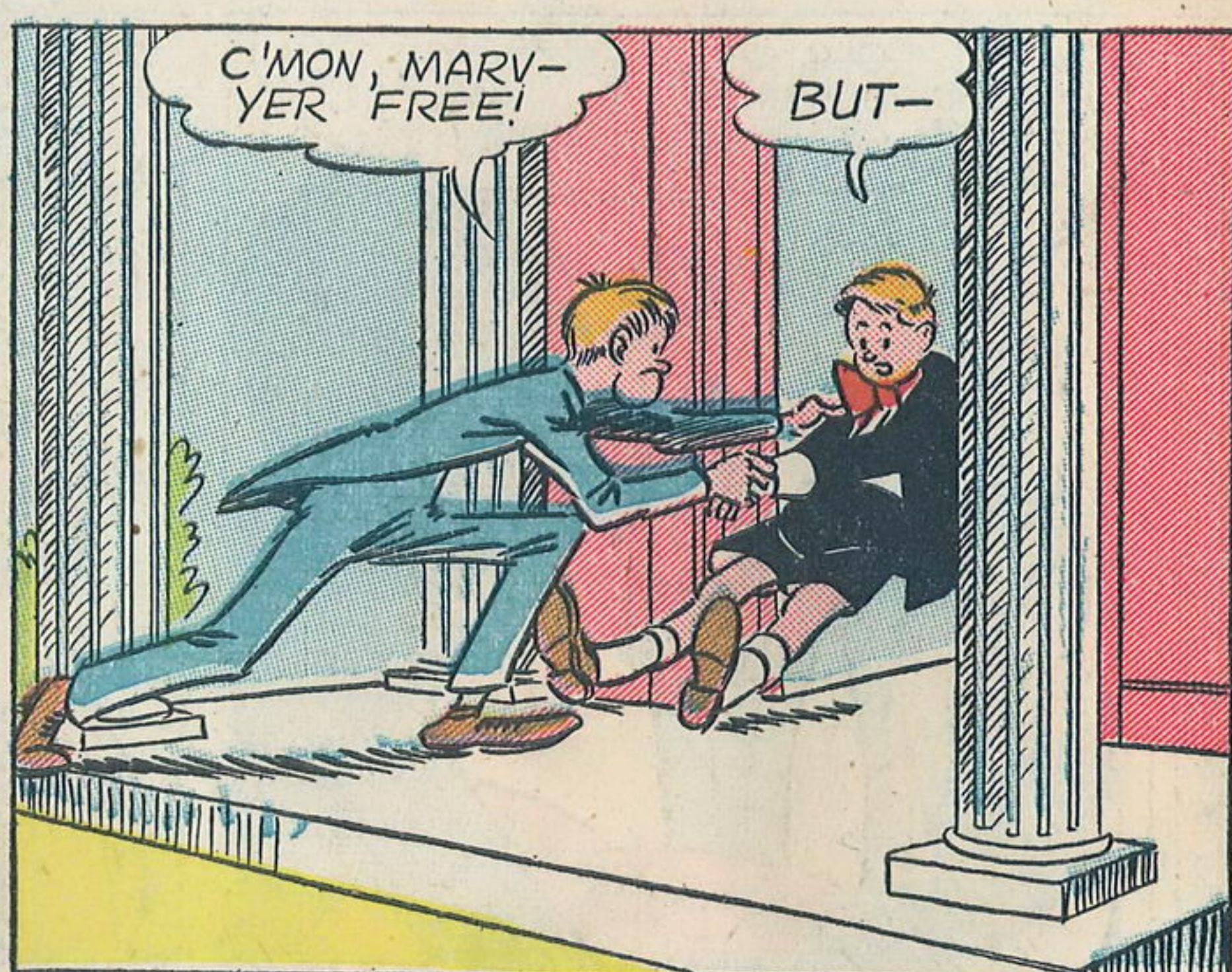
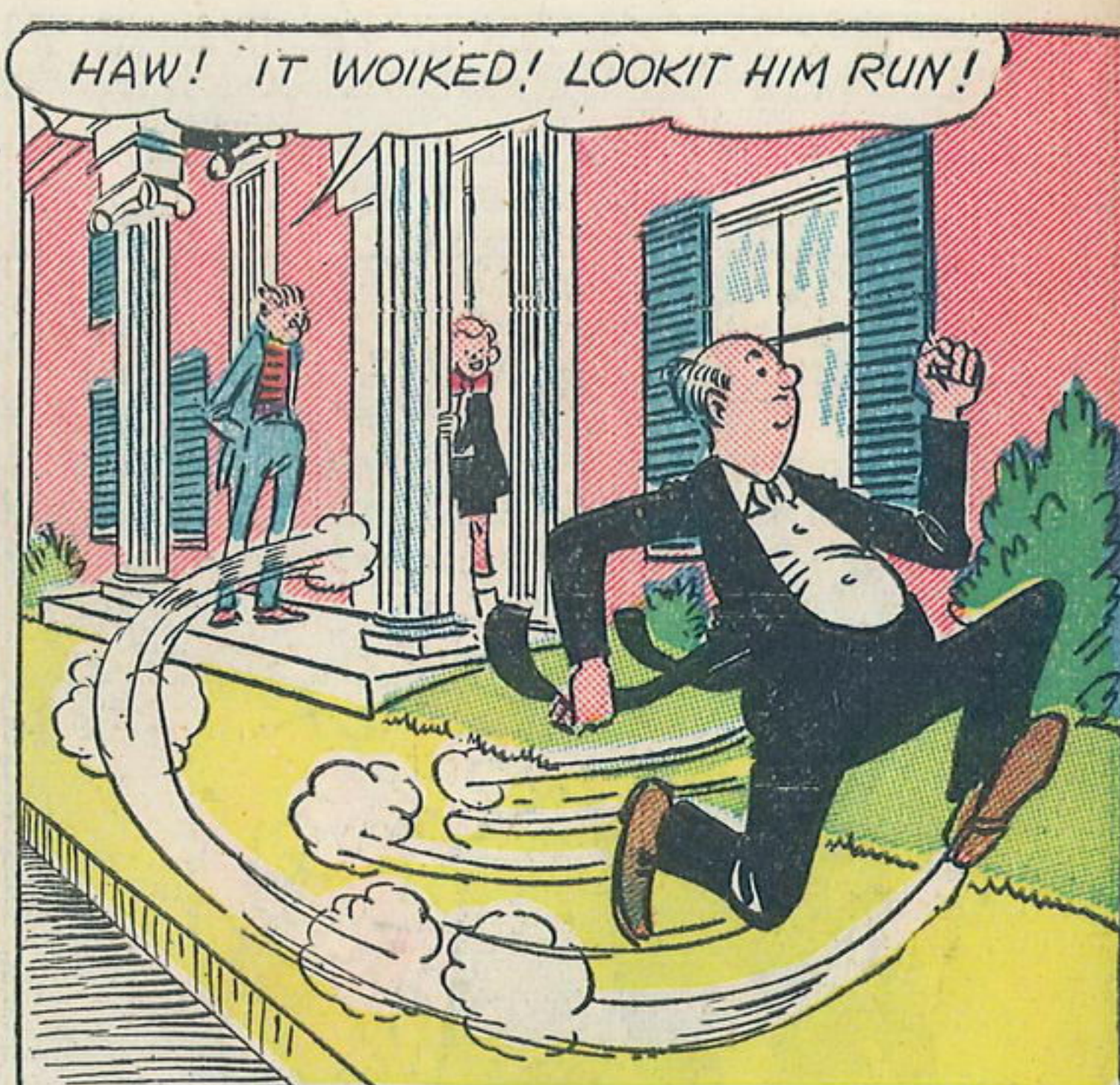
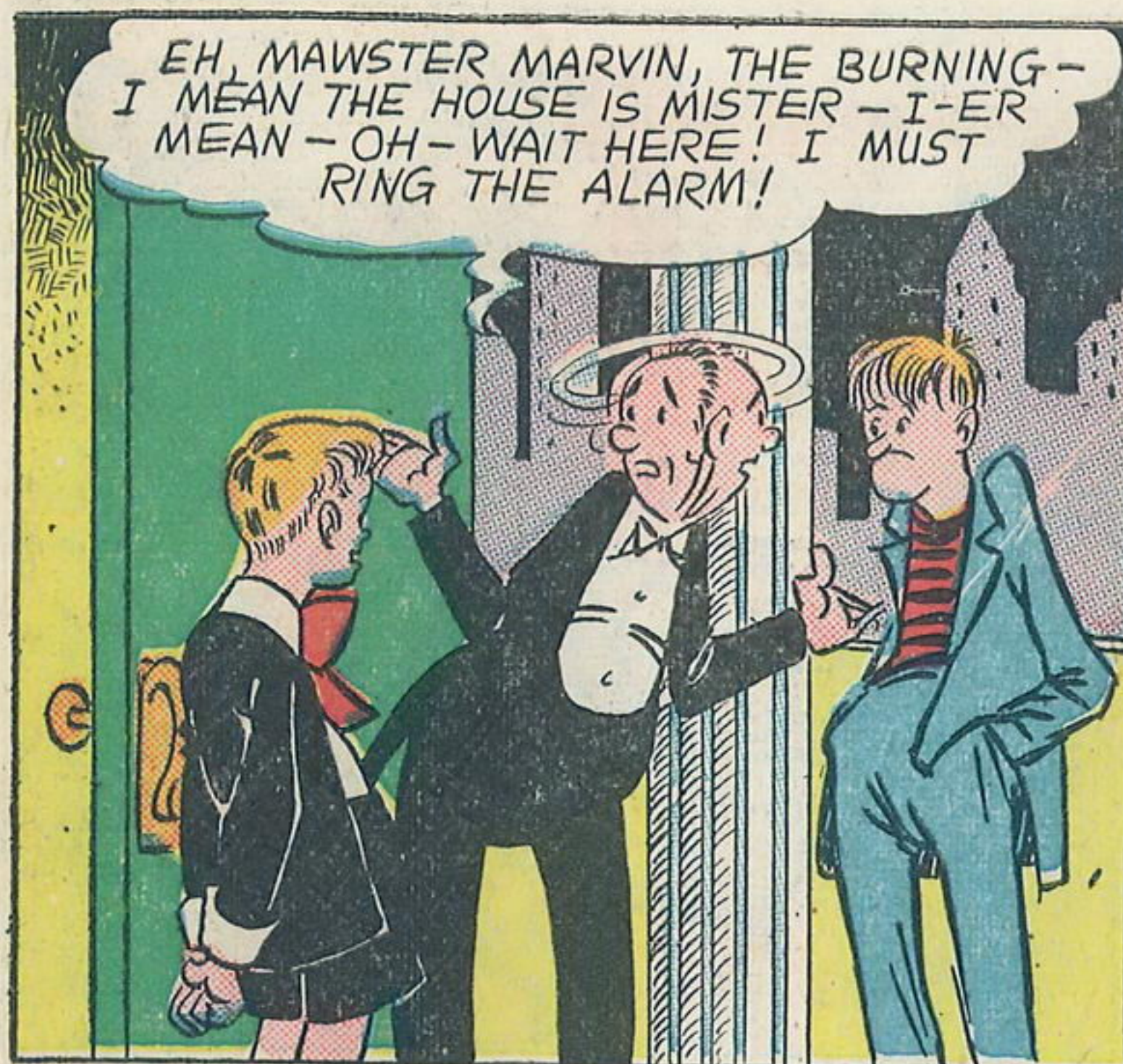
NO, MARVIN! I DISTINCTLY
SAID YOU CANNOT GO OUT
WHILE YOUR FATHER AND
I ARE AT THE OPERA! I'M
SIMPLY DYING TO SHOW OFF
MY FIFTY THOUSAND DOLLAR
NECKLACE!

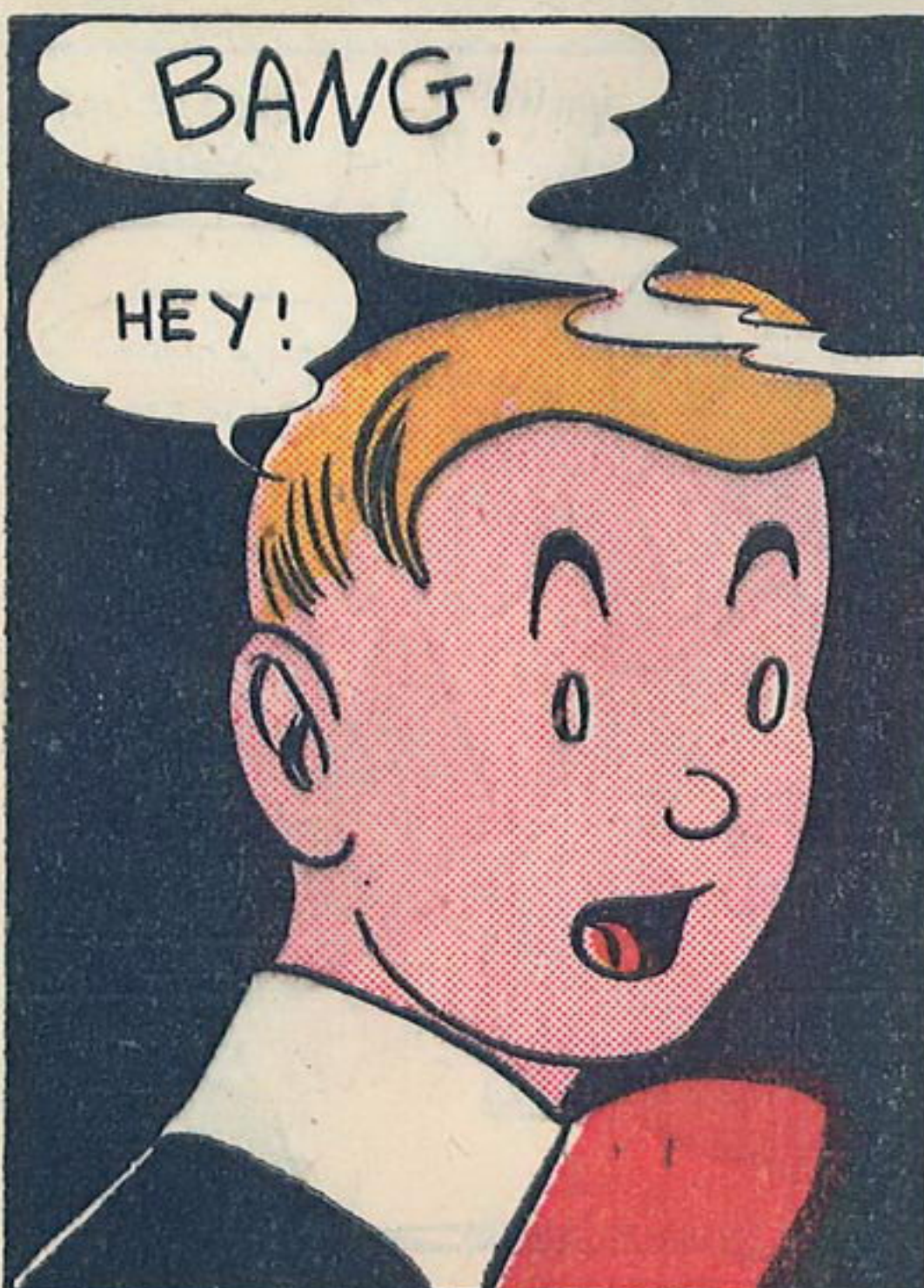
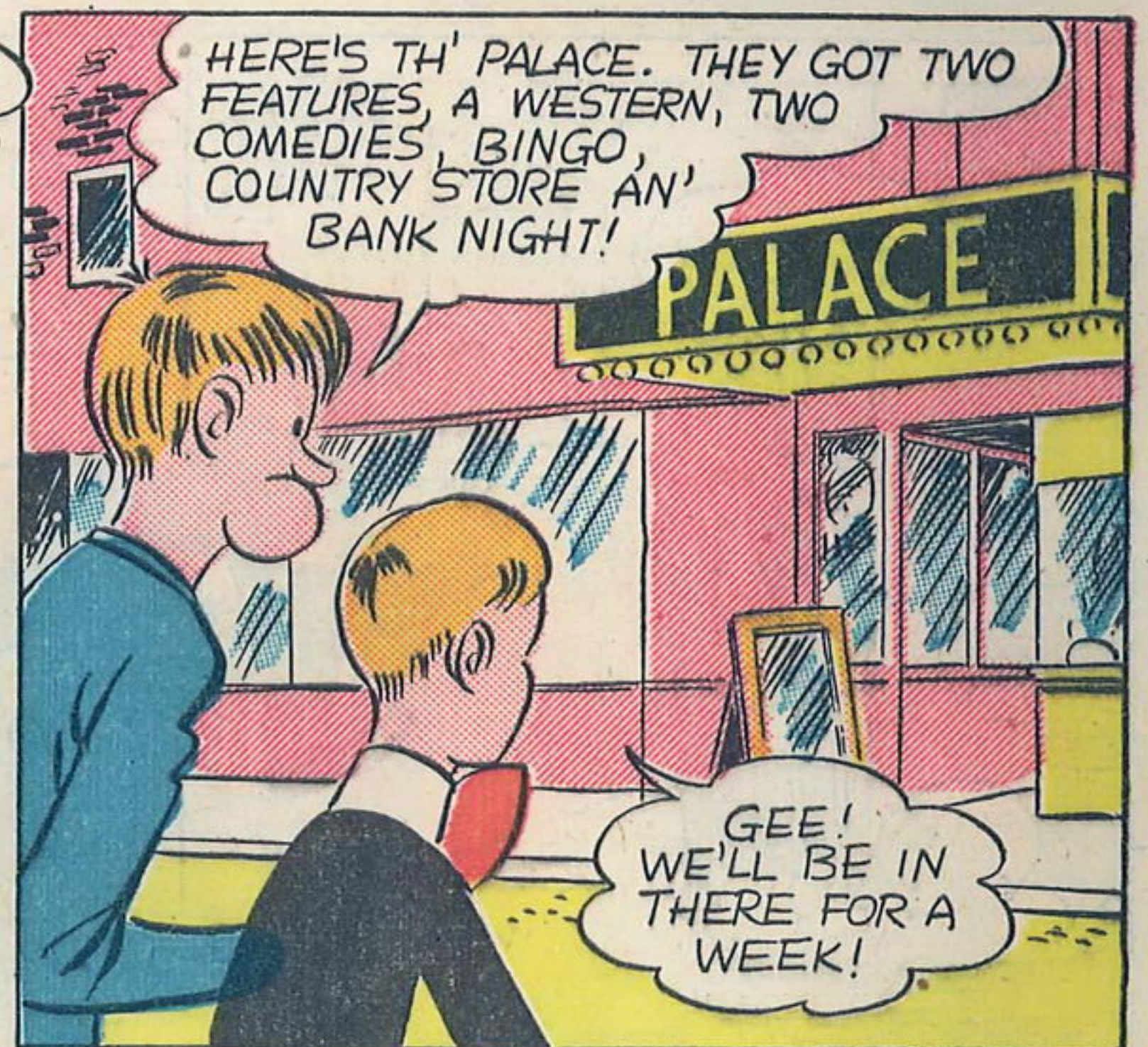
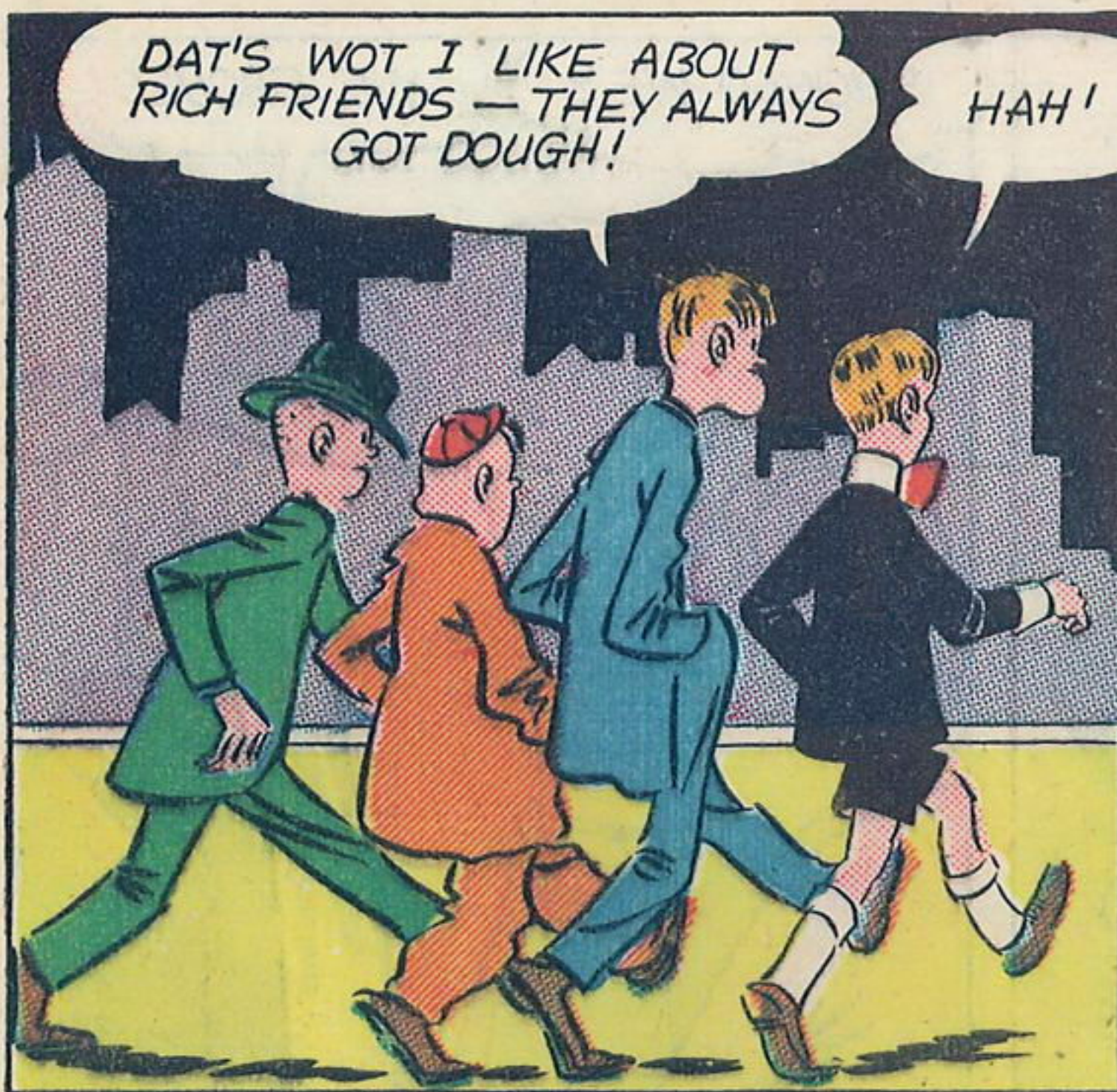
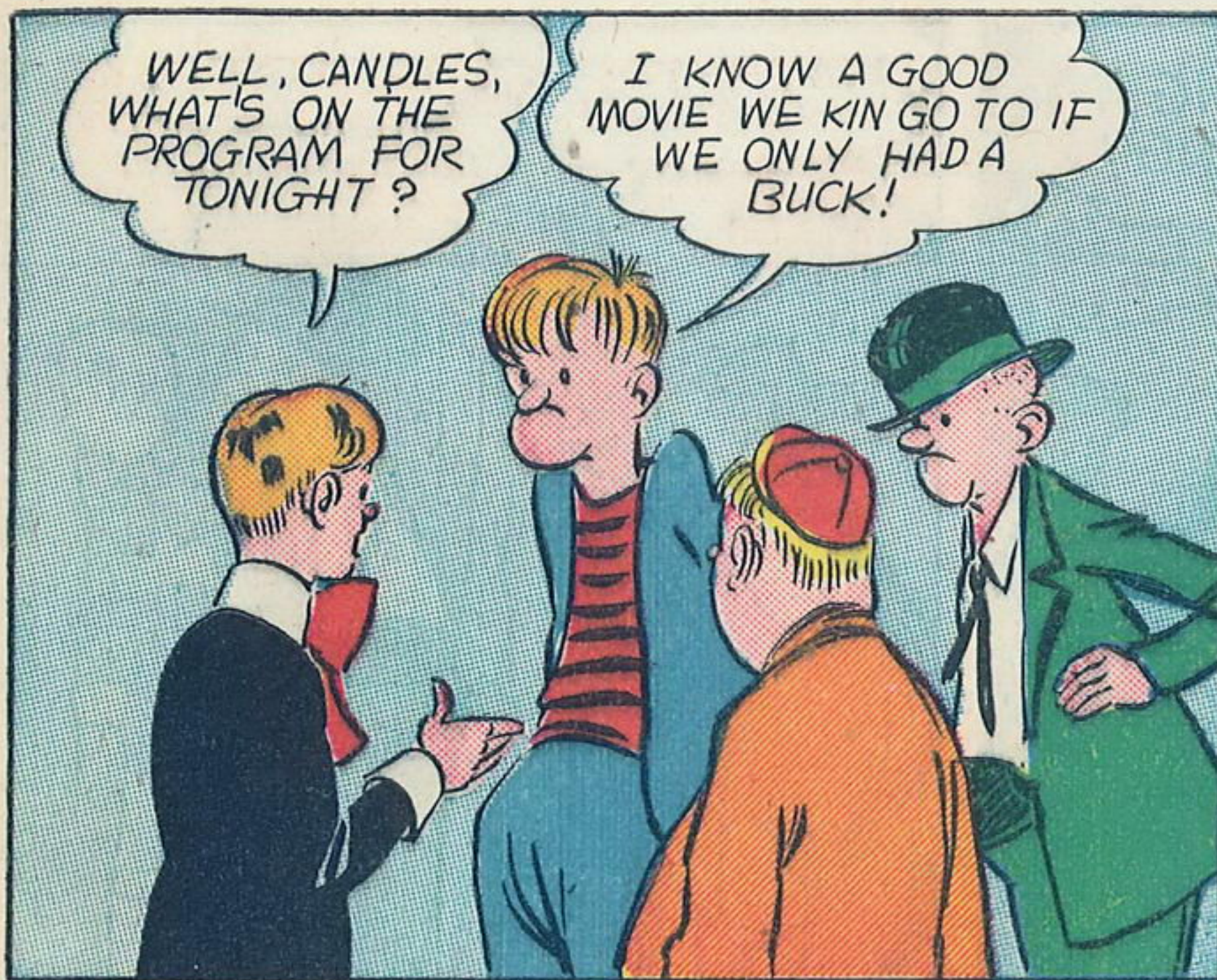
AW— BUT
MOTHER—

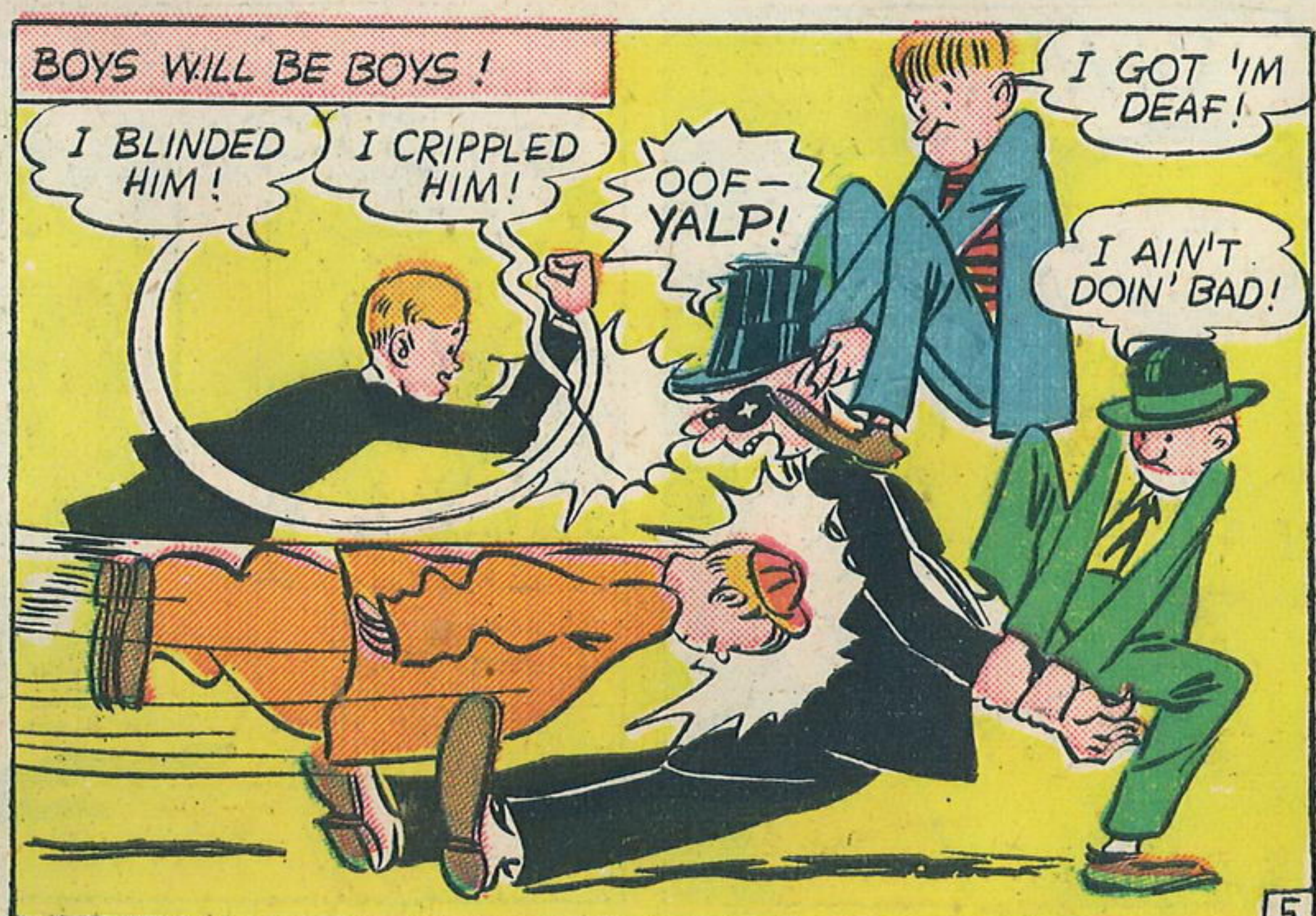
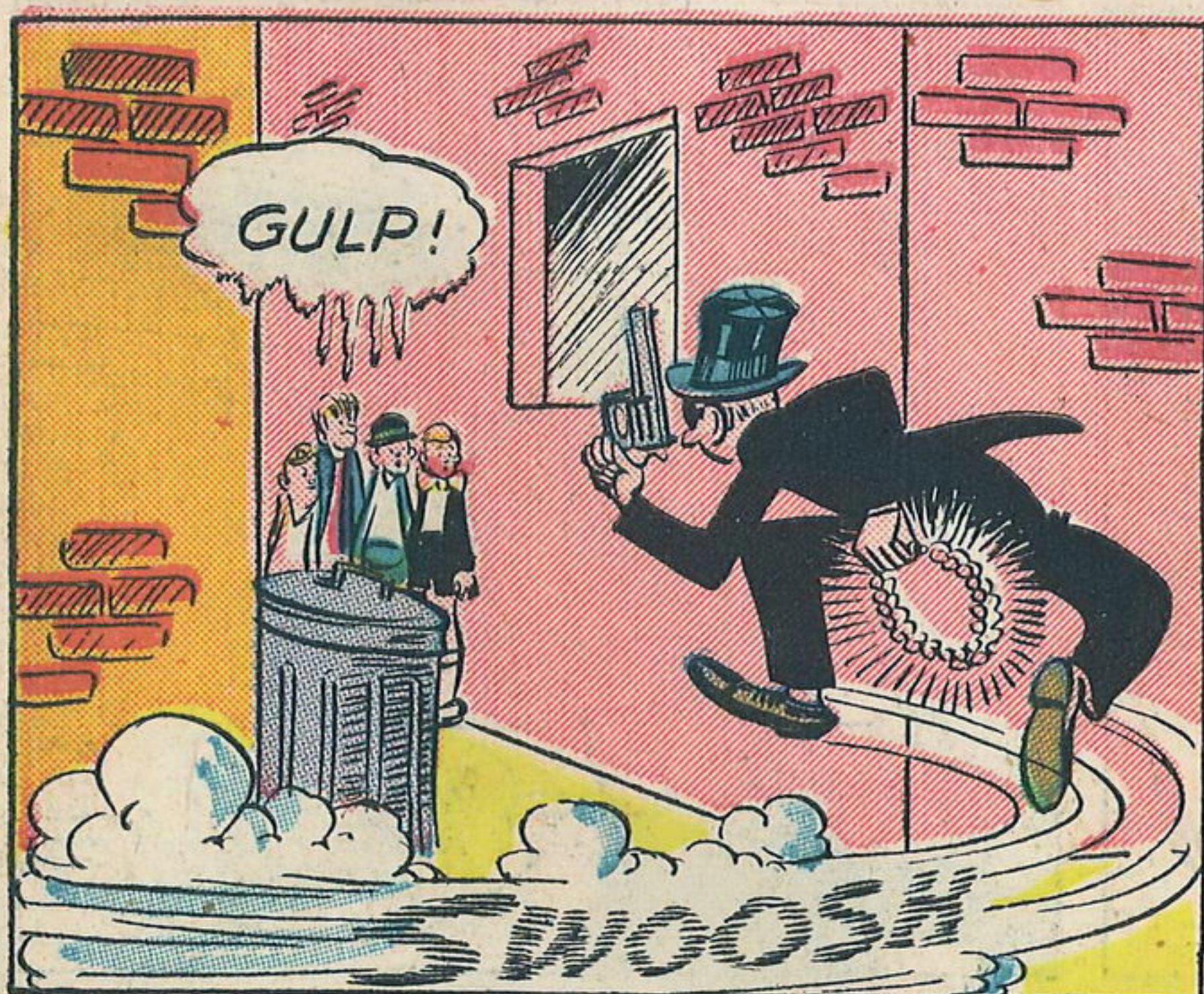
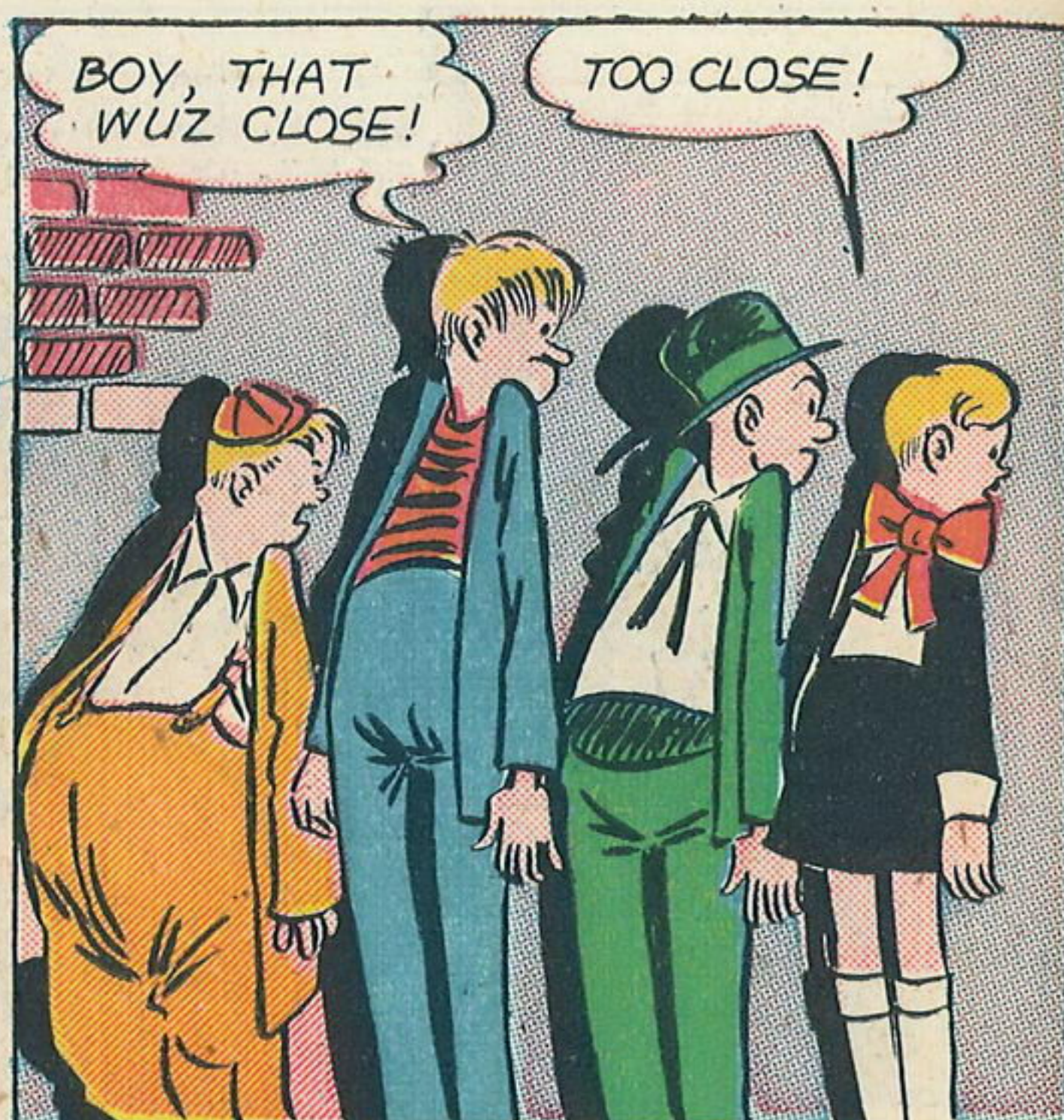
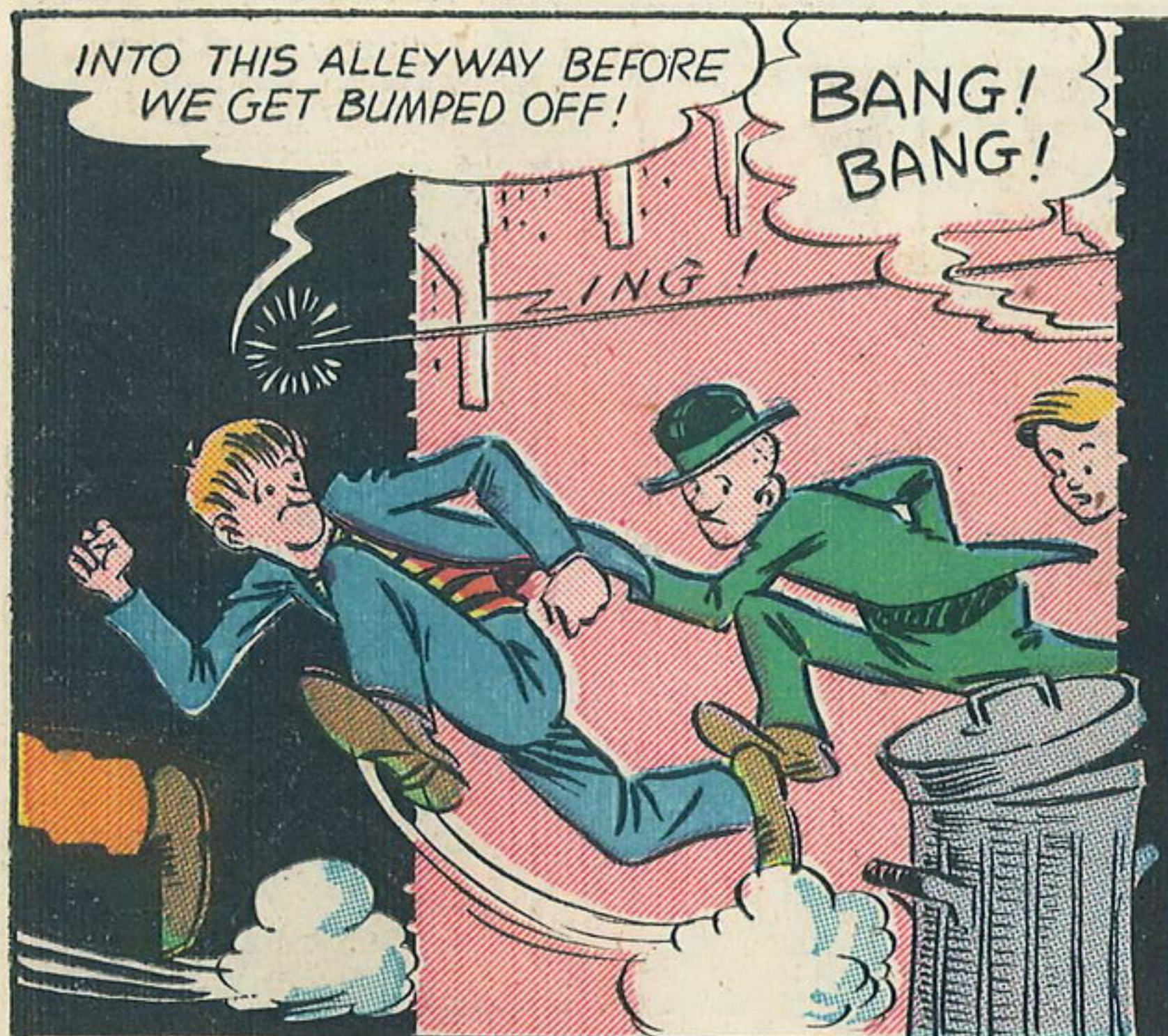
THAT'S FINAL, MARVIN! AND I'M
INSTRUCTING RIVERS NOT TO LET
YOU OUT OF HIS SIGHT! OH
RIVERS! RIVERS!

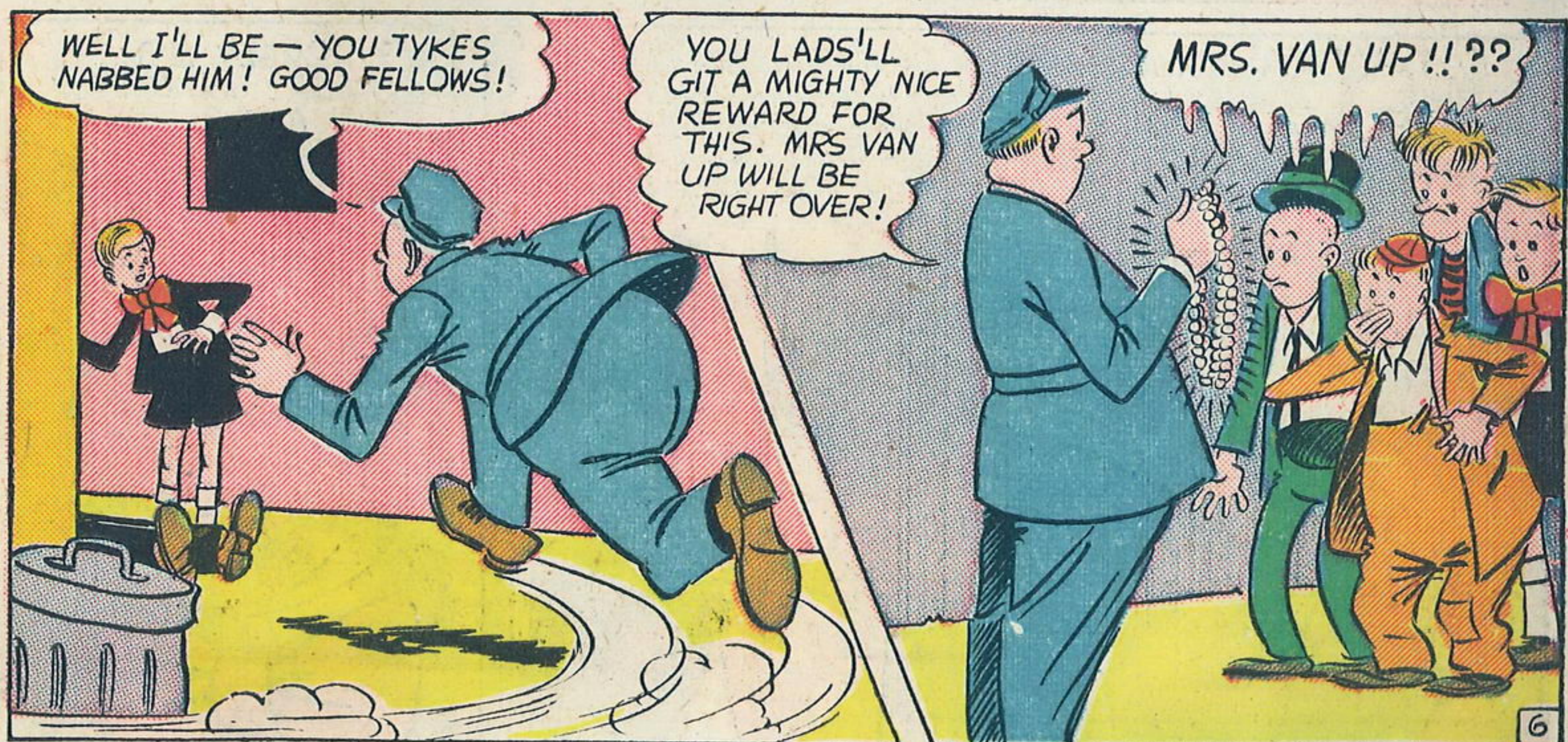
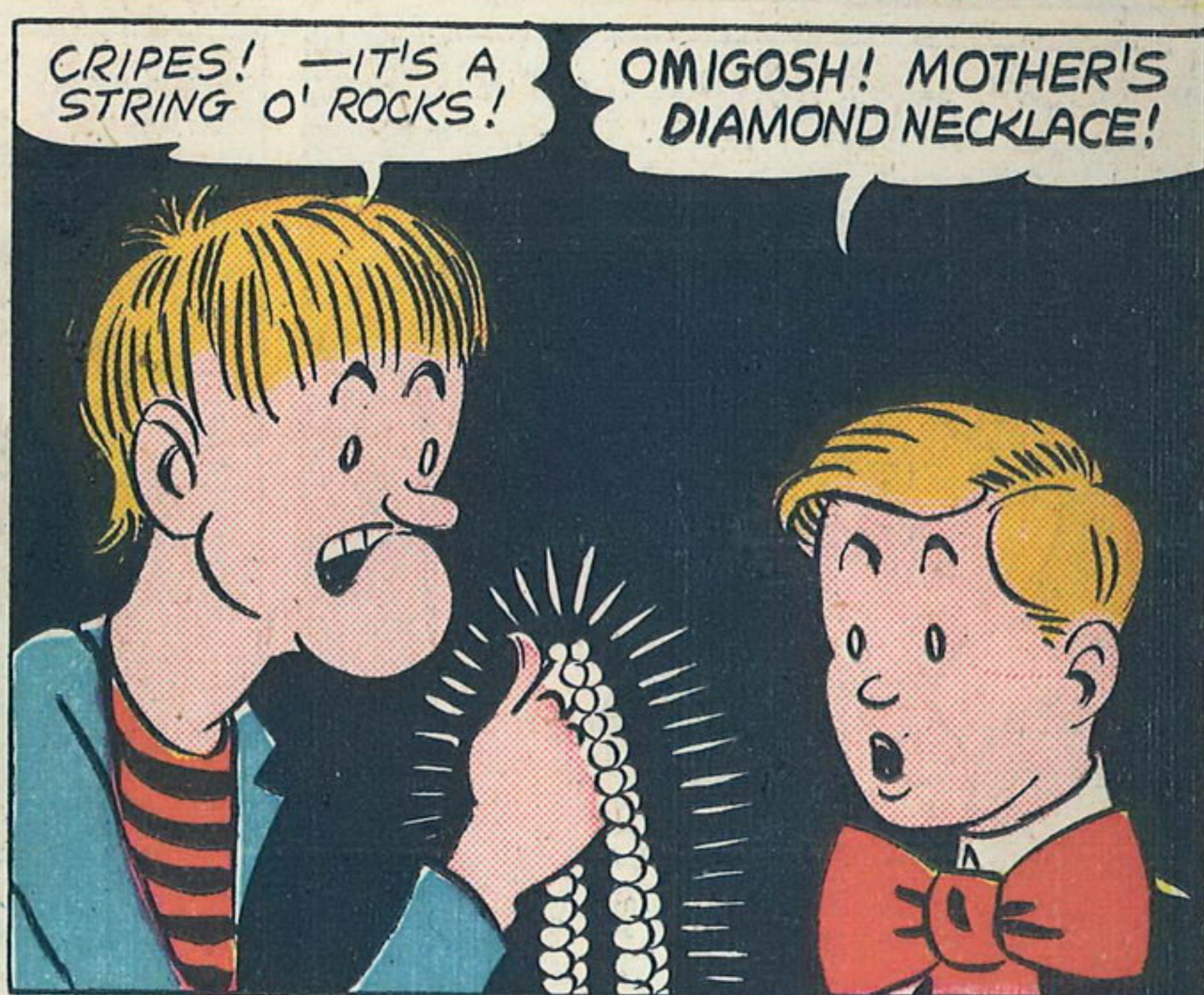
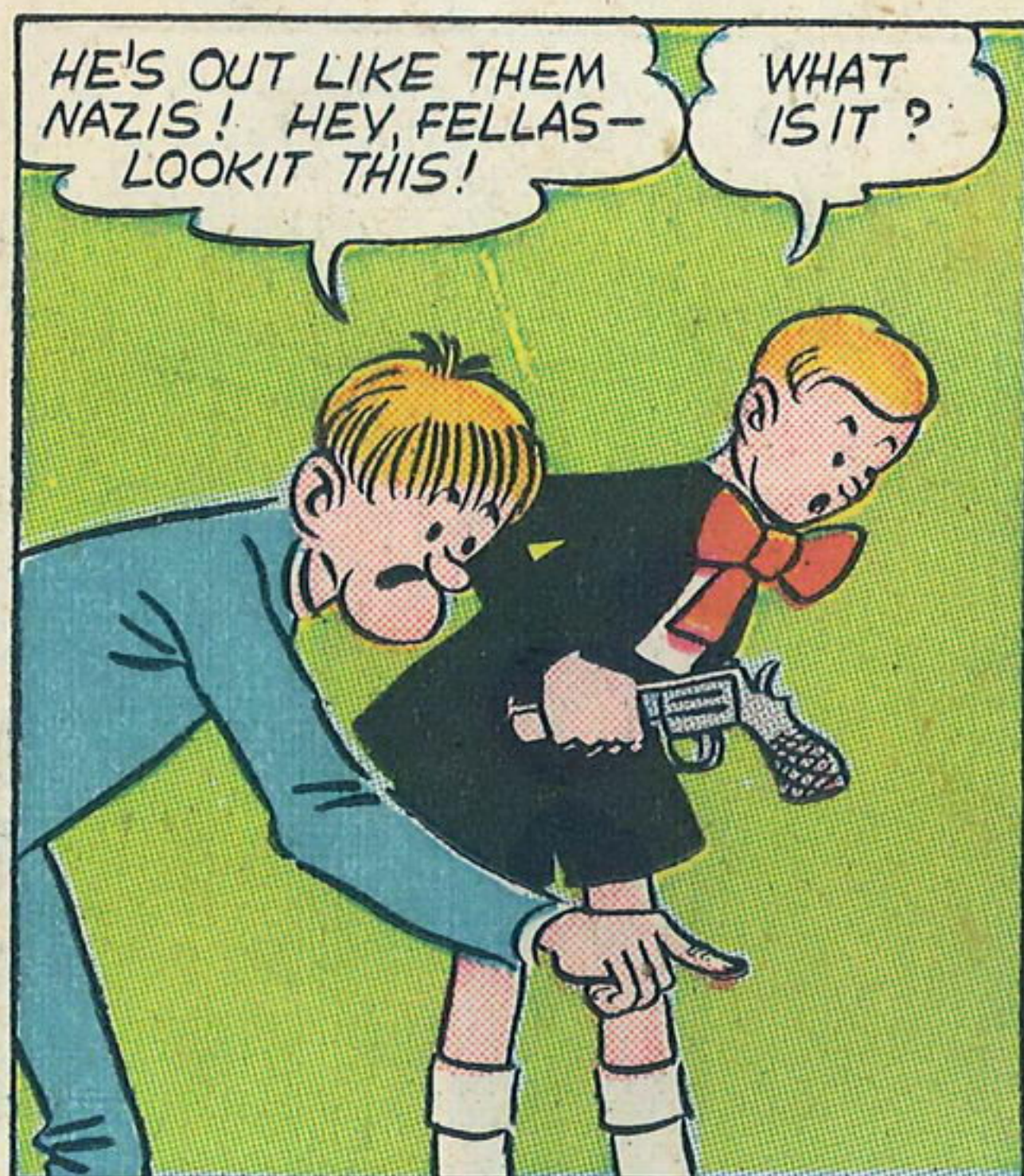
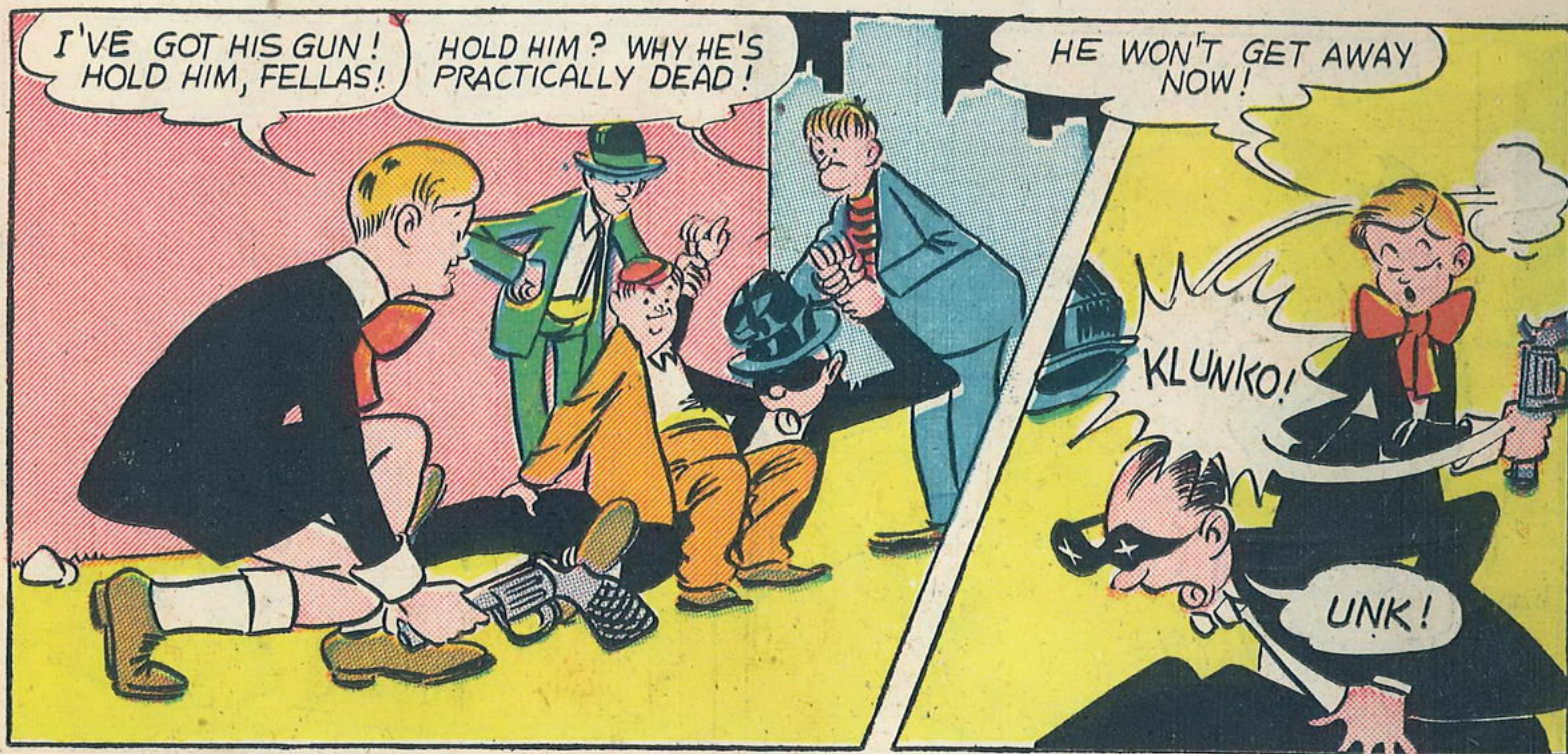
SHUCKS'N
EVERYTHING!

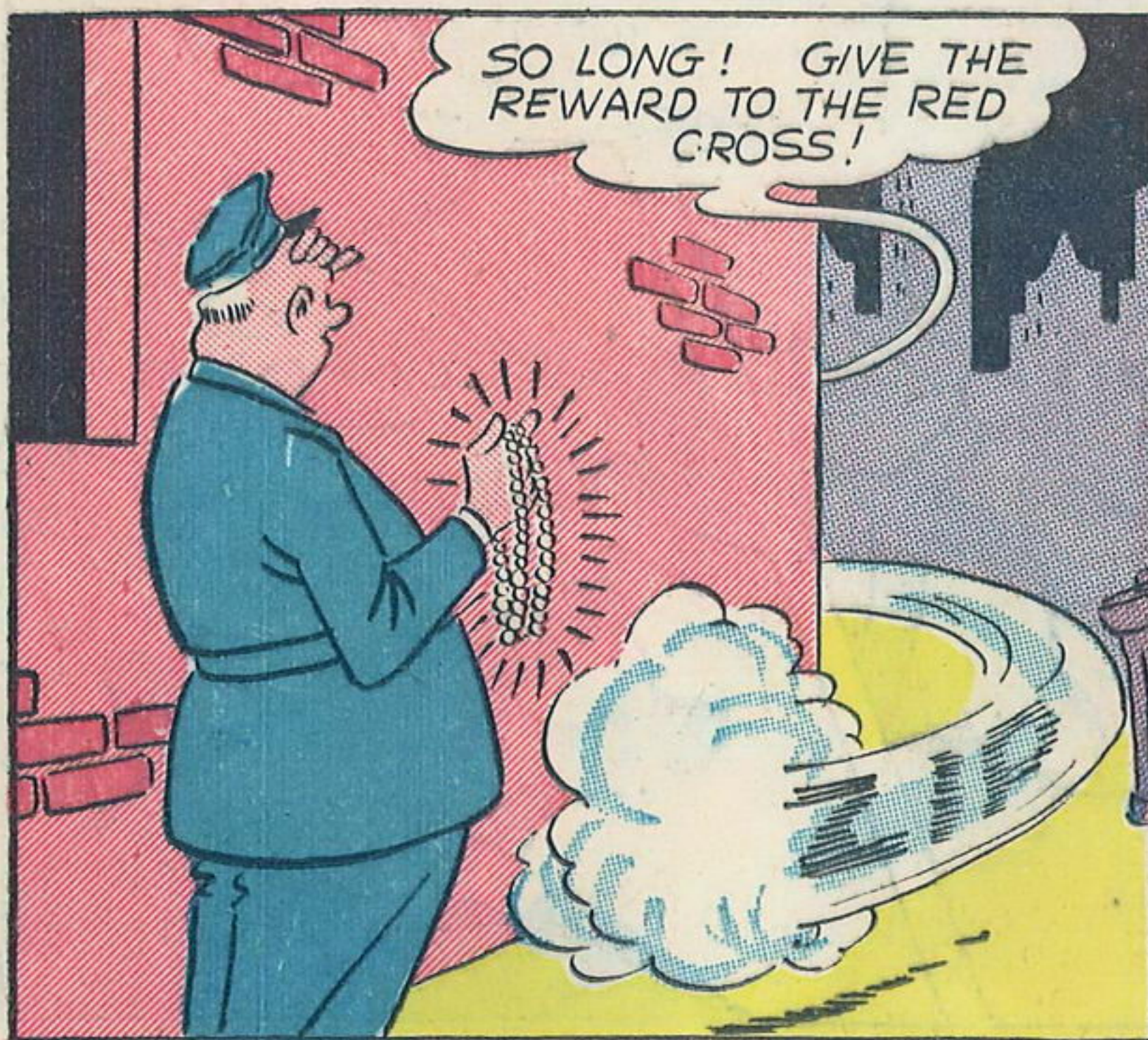




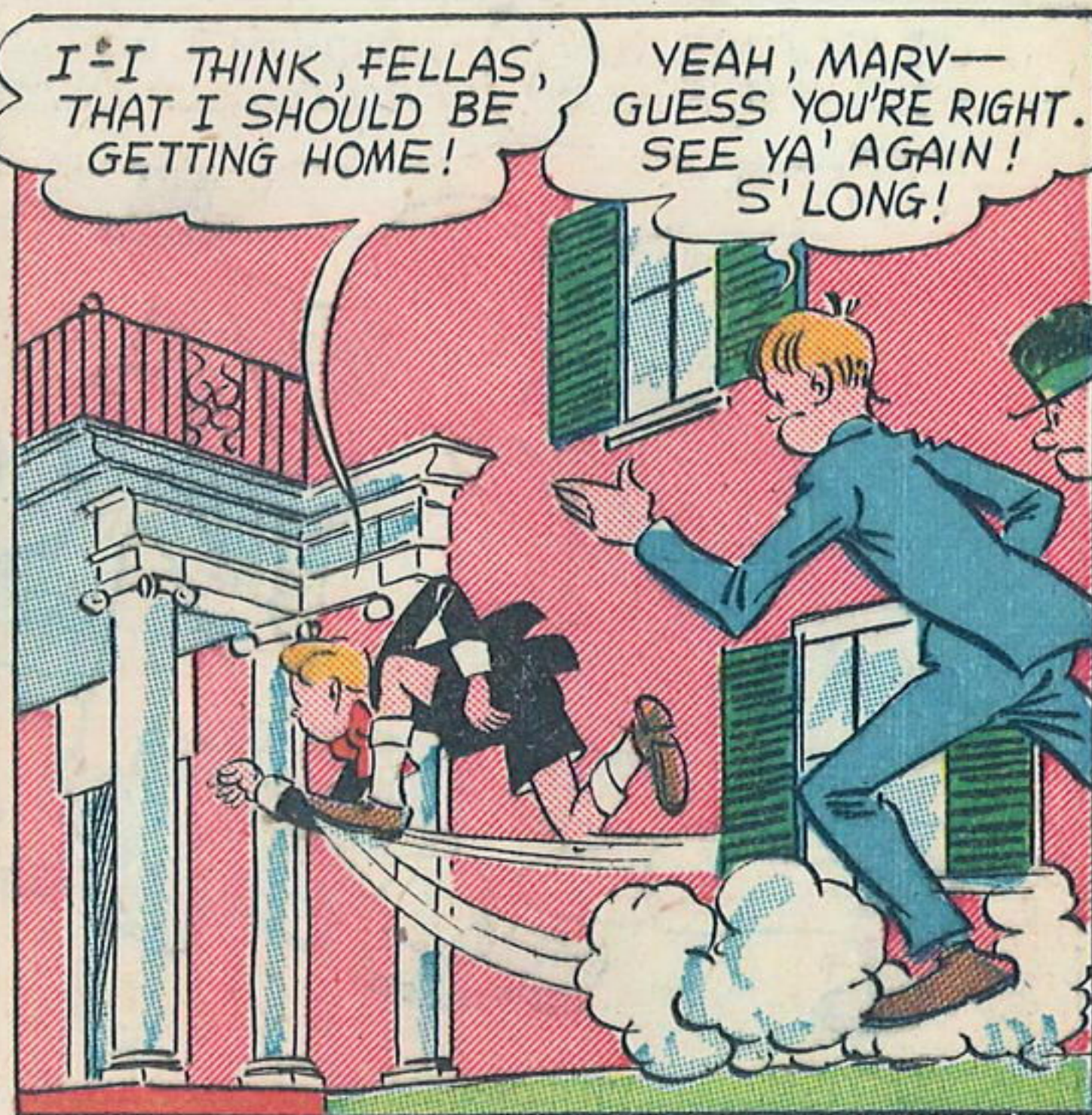






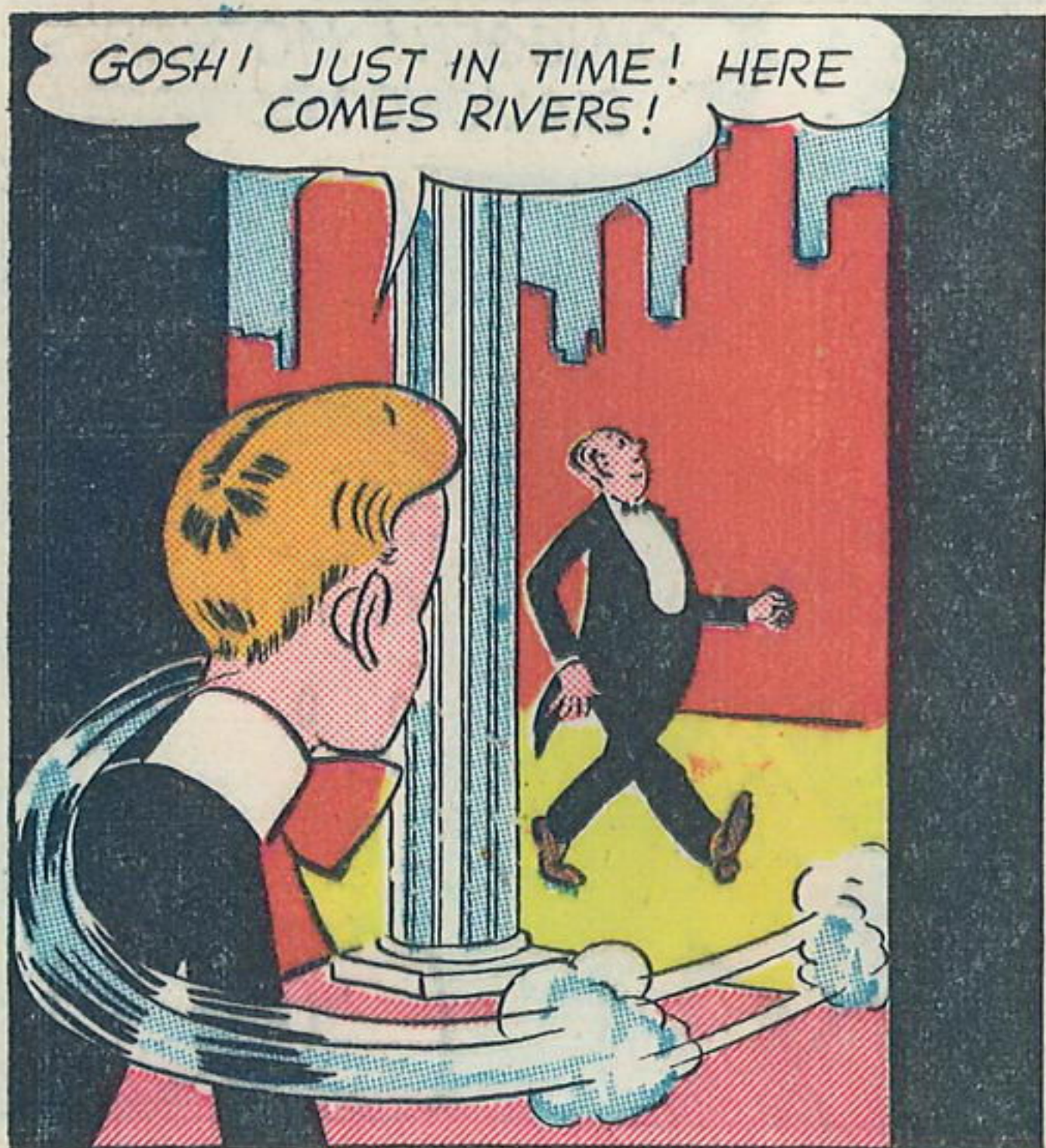


SO LONG! GIVE THE
REWARD TO THE RED
CROSS!

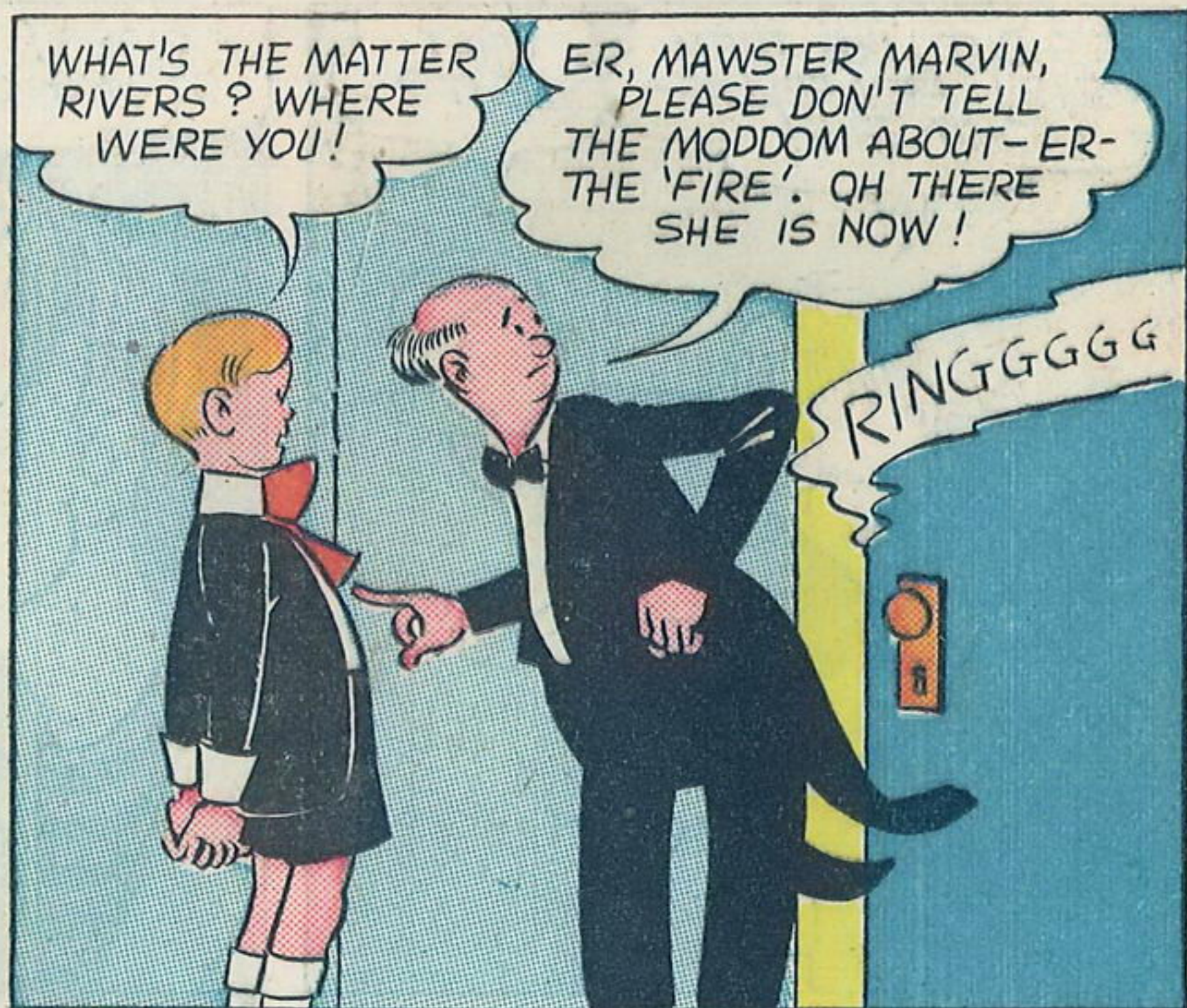


I-I THINK, FELLAS,
THAT I SHOULD BE
GETTING HOME!

VEAH, MARV—
GUESS YOU'RE RIGHT.
SEE YA' AGAIN!
S' LONG!



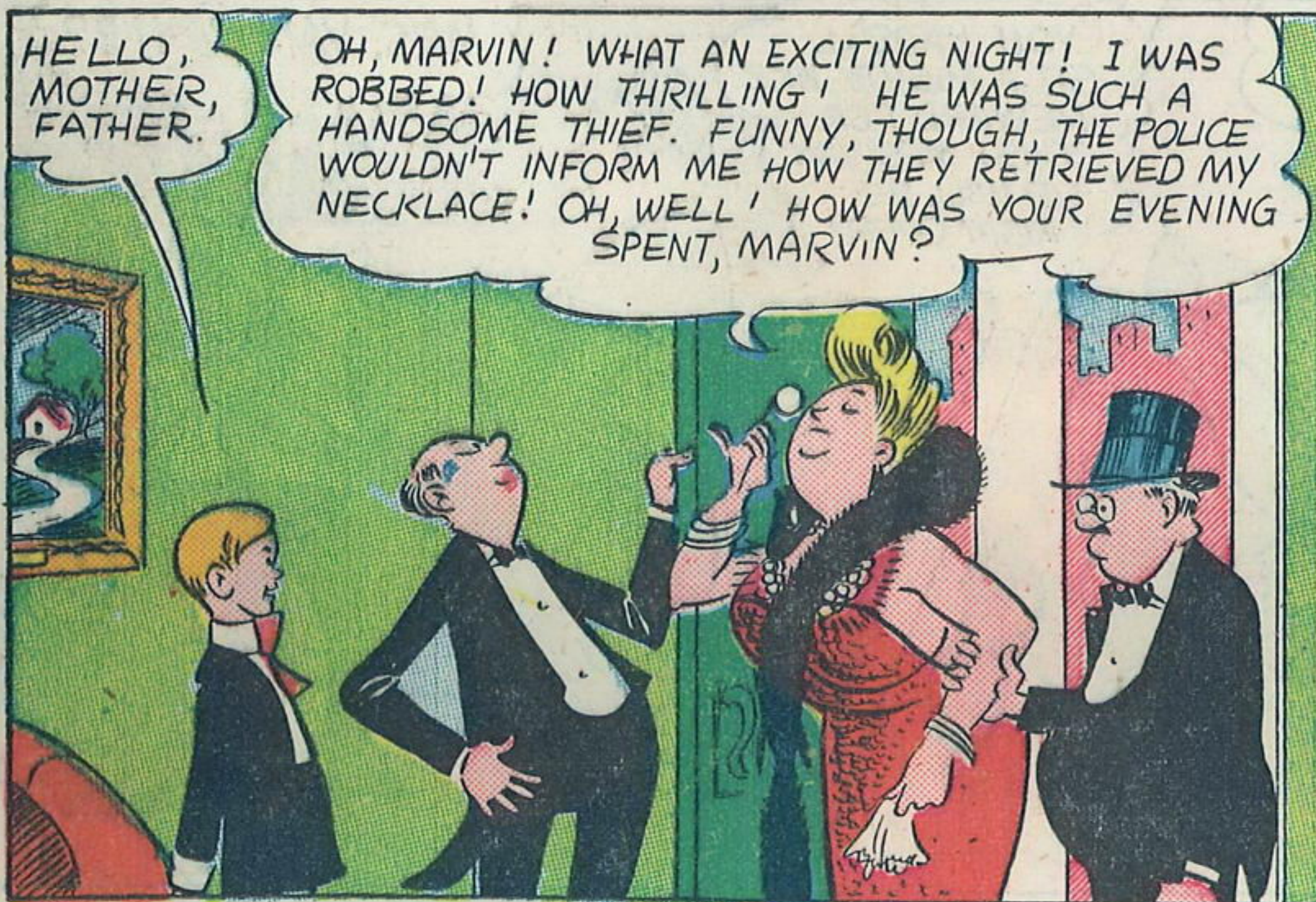
GOSH! JUST IN TIME! HERE
COMES RIVERS!



WHAT'S THE MATTER
RIVERS? WHERE
WERE YOU!

ER, MAWSTER MARVIN,
PLEASE DON'T TELL
THE MODDOM ABOUT- ER-
THE 'FIRE'. QH THERE
SHE IS NOW!

RINGGGGG



HELLO,
MOTHER,
FATHER.

OH, MARVIN! WHAT AN EXCITING NIGHT! I WAS
ROBBED! HOW THRILLING! HE WAS SUCH A
HANDSOME THIEF. FUNNY, THOUGH, THE POLICE
WOULDN'T INFORM ME HOW THEY RETRIEVED MY
NECKLACE! OH, WELL! HOW WAS YOUR EVENING
SPENT, MARVIN?



EXTREMELY DULL,
MOTHER! EXTREMELY
DULL! ASK RIVERS!

GRAVES

GHOST HUNTER

By B. CHRYSLER



LATE ONE WINTERS NIGHT, A PERSISTANT BELL RINGING BRINGS GRAVES TO THE DOOR . . .

A THREAT SIGNED WITH A CAT'S PAW.. I WOULDN'T WORRY ABOUT IT. SOME FRIEND PLAYING A JOKE.. GO HOME AND GET SOME SLEEP.

WHAT EVER YOU SHAY, GRAVES. THANKS!

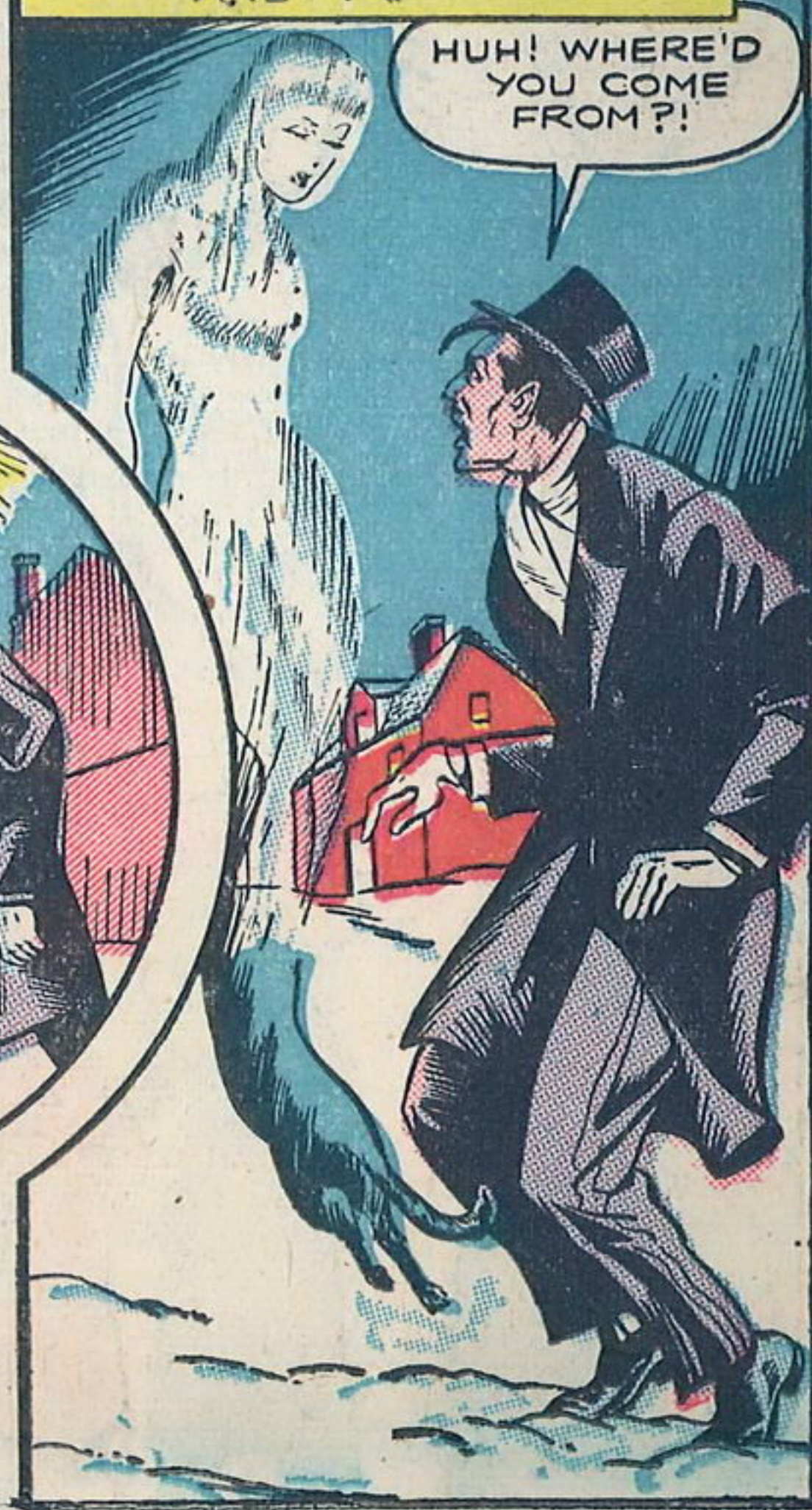


NICE LI'L KITTY. YOU DIDN'T SEND ME THAT NASTY THREAT.. DID YOU...



SUDDENLY THE AIR CHILLS.. AND..

HUH! WHERE'D YOU COME FROM?!



DON'T... STOP!
HELP! HELP!



THE NEXT MORNING...

HE'S DEAD ALL
RIGHT! FIENDISHLY
CLAWED WITH
SOMETHING
POISONOUS.
SEE HOW THE
MARKS TURNED
BLUE, MR. GRAVES?

I'LL NEVER
FORGIVE
MYSELF! HE
ASKED FOR
HELP, BUT I
THOUGHT IT
WAS A
HOAX!



THE NAME IN HIS
WALLET SHOWS HE'S
CHARLES WRIGHT,
THE BANKER! WE'D
BETTER PAY A
VISIT TO HIS HOME!



I AM CLAUDE WRIGHT,
CHARLES' BROTHER...
THIS IS MY FIANCEE,
MISS GRANT.

HOWDY.



IT IS NOT THE FIRST
VIOLENT DEATH IN OUR
FAMILY, MR. GRAVES...WAIT
'TIL YOU READ THE FAMILY
HISTORY. WHILE IN INDIA
MY FATHER WAS KILLED
IN THE SAME MANNER!
IT IS BELIEVED THAT HE
HAD BEEN CLAWED TO
DEATH BY SOME
JUNGLE BEAST!

REALLY.

I HAVE A
FEELING
I'M TO BE
THE NEXT
VICTIM!

ONLY
CATS
AND
WOMEN
SCRATCH...



CATS! AND THAT
CAT IN THE YARD...
IT WALKS IN THE
FRESH SNOW YET
LEAVES NO
TRACKS!



IT'S RUNNING AWAY!
NOW WHAT WOULD
A STRAY CAT BE
DOING AROUND
HERE?

WHAT'S THIS?
LOOKS LIKE
A NOTE!

I JUST GOT A REPORT FROM THE
MEDICAL EXAMINER, MR. GRAVES.
THAT POISON IN HIS BODY HASN'T
BEEN IN USE FOR CENTURIES.
THERE'S SOME LEGEND ABOUT
WITCHES BREWING IT WAY
BACK IN THE MIDDLE AGES!

THAT'S INTERESTING!
I'M GOING INSIDE, BUT
I SUGGEST YOU SEARCH
THE GROUNDS
THOROUGHLY...

No one in
your family
can escape
punishment.
The curse shall
be fulfilled!

I'LL TELL HIM ABOUT
THE NOTE AFTER I
TAKE A LOOK AT THE
FAMILY HISTORY. I'VE
A HUNCH I MIGHT FIND
SOMETHING IMPORTANT
HERE...

THIS CURSE ON OUR
FAMILY BEGAN IN 1745
WHEN HAROLD WRIGHT,
A JUDGE IN NORTH
SALEM, MASSACHUSETTS,
PASSED SENTENCE ON
AGNES HARRINGTON
TO BE BURNED AT THE
STAKE FOR PRACTICING
WITCHCRAFT. SHE
PROCLAIMED A CURSE
ON HIS FAMILY UNTO
THE LAST UNTO
GENERATION...

SUDDENLY A MYSTERIOUS LIGHT FILLS THE ROOM.. AND...

INQUISITIVE, AREN'T YOU?! LET ME SHOW YOU SOMETHING ELSE!

YOU... AGNES HARRINGTON!

WAIT... I'LL FOLLOW YOU, WHAT IS IT YOU WANT TO SHOW ME?!

-TO THE SUN PORCH? WHAT COULD BE THERE?

GREAT SCOTT! MISS GRANT.. DEAD!

A FEW MINUTES LATER...

BUT HOW.. HOW? WE WERE ALL IN THE HOUSE...

I'M NEXT.. I KNOW IT! HELP ME! HELP ME!

HOW CAN I HELP HIM?

CLAUDE IS THE LAST OF THE FAMILY. WHEN HE DIES, MY CURSE IS FULFILLED... BUT I MUST REMOVE GRAVES AS I DID THE GIRL!

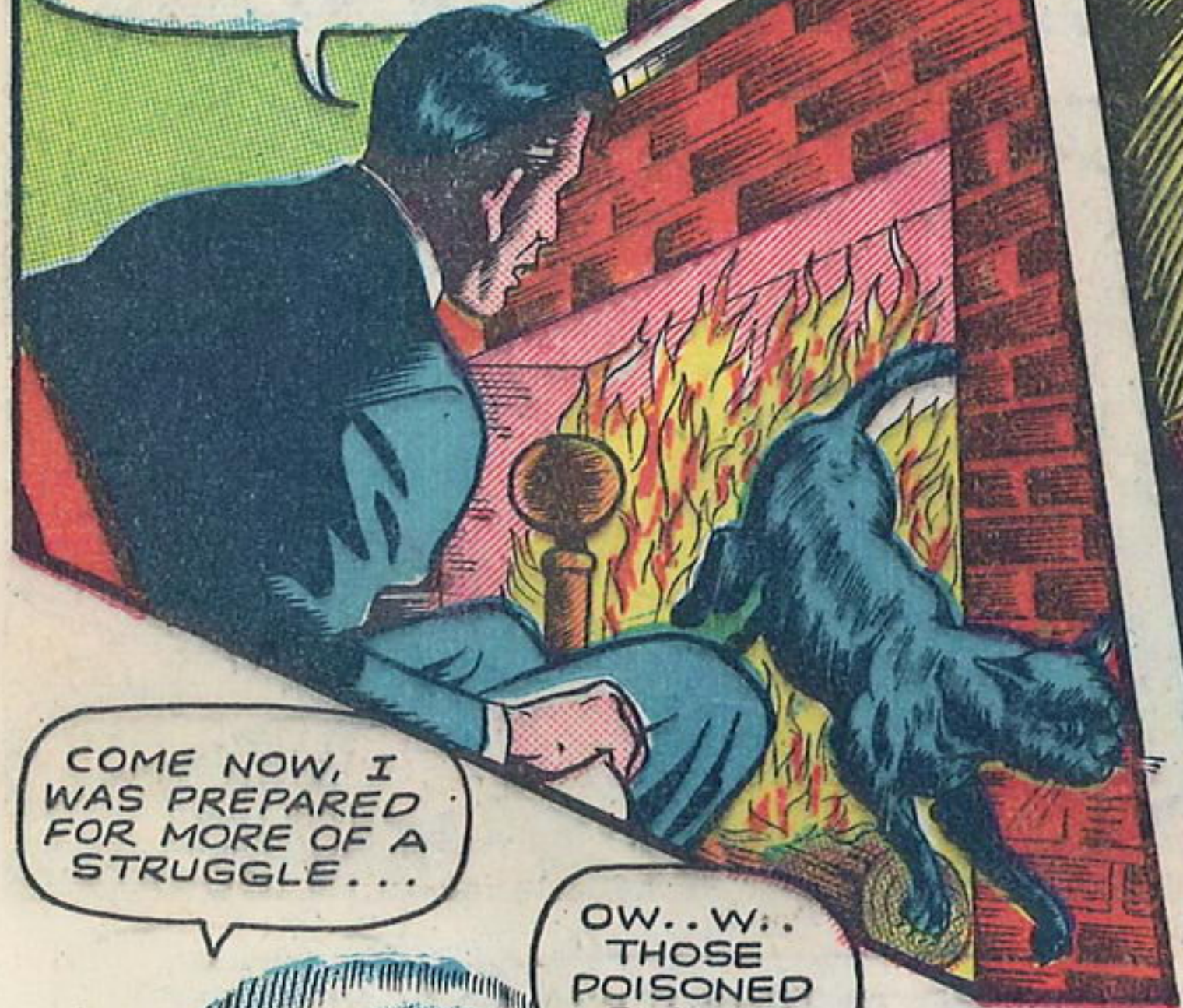
I'M GOING TO TOWN. CONTINUE TO SEARCH THE GROUNDS FOR A TRACE OF THAT CAT. ACTUALLY IT'S A WITCH THAT WAS BURNED TO DEATH AT THE STAKE IN 1745!



LATER, GRAVES RETURNS... TO THE WRIGHT LIBRARY...

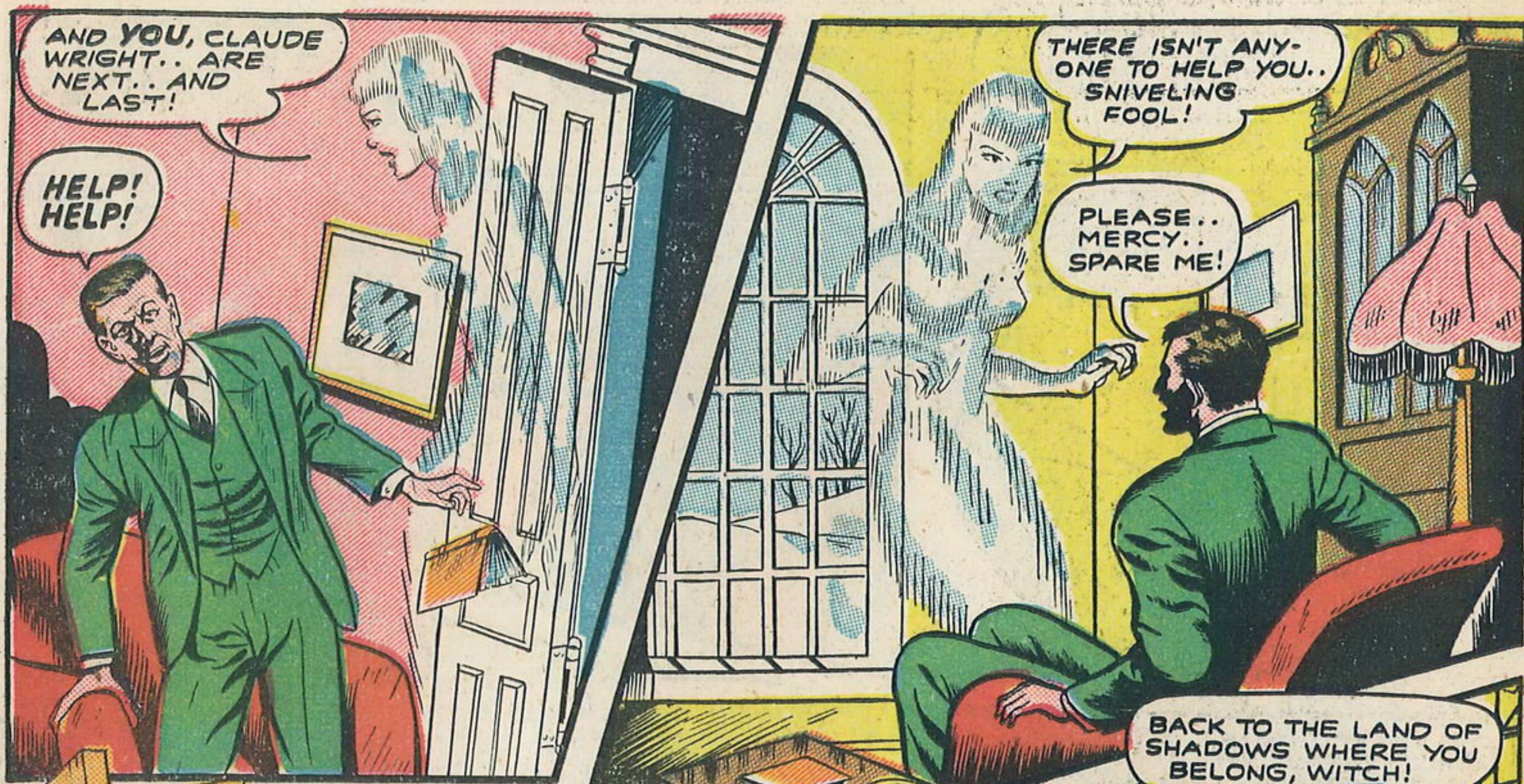


AH! THERE SHE IS.. SOONER THAN I EXPECTED! NOW TO TAKE MY DISINTEGRATOR AND FINISH HER OFF.. WHERE DID I PUT IT.. **IT'S GONE!**



GRAVES, YOU SHOULD HAVE KNOWN IF WE CROSSED PATHS, IT SPELLED DOOM FOR ONE OF US.. THAT **ONE** IS YOU!





AND YOU, CLAUDE WRIGHT... ARE NEXT... AND LAST!

HELP! HELP!

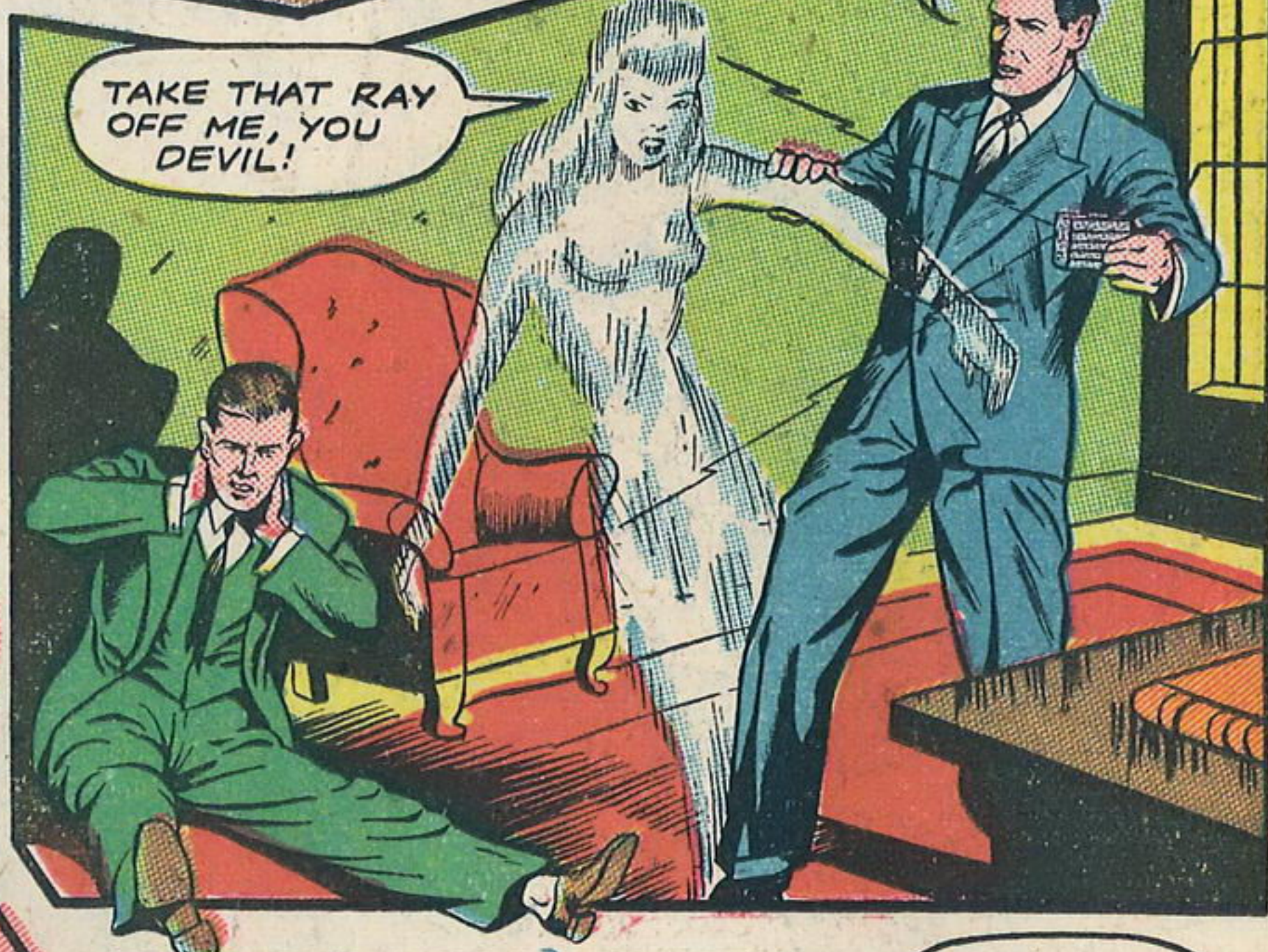
THERE ISN'T ANY-ONE TO HELP YOU.. SNIVELING FOOL!

PLEASE.. MERCY.. SPARE ME!

BACK TO THE LAND OF SHADOWS WHERE YOU BELONG, WITCH!



IT'S LUCKY I FOUND MY DISINTEGRATOR. THAT WILL FINISH HER! I'M NOT DEAD AS SHE HOPED!



TAKE THAT RAY OFF ME, YOU DEVIL!

IN A SWIRL OF MIST, THE SPECTRE FADES.. AND GRAVES RUSHES TO THE AID OF HER WOULD BE VICTIM. . .



HOW CAN I EVER THANK YOU, MR. GRAVES?

BOSH! HOLD STEADY, NOW!

WHAT'S GOING ON HERE, MEN?

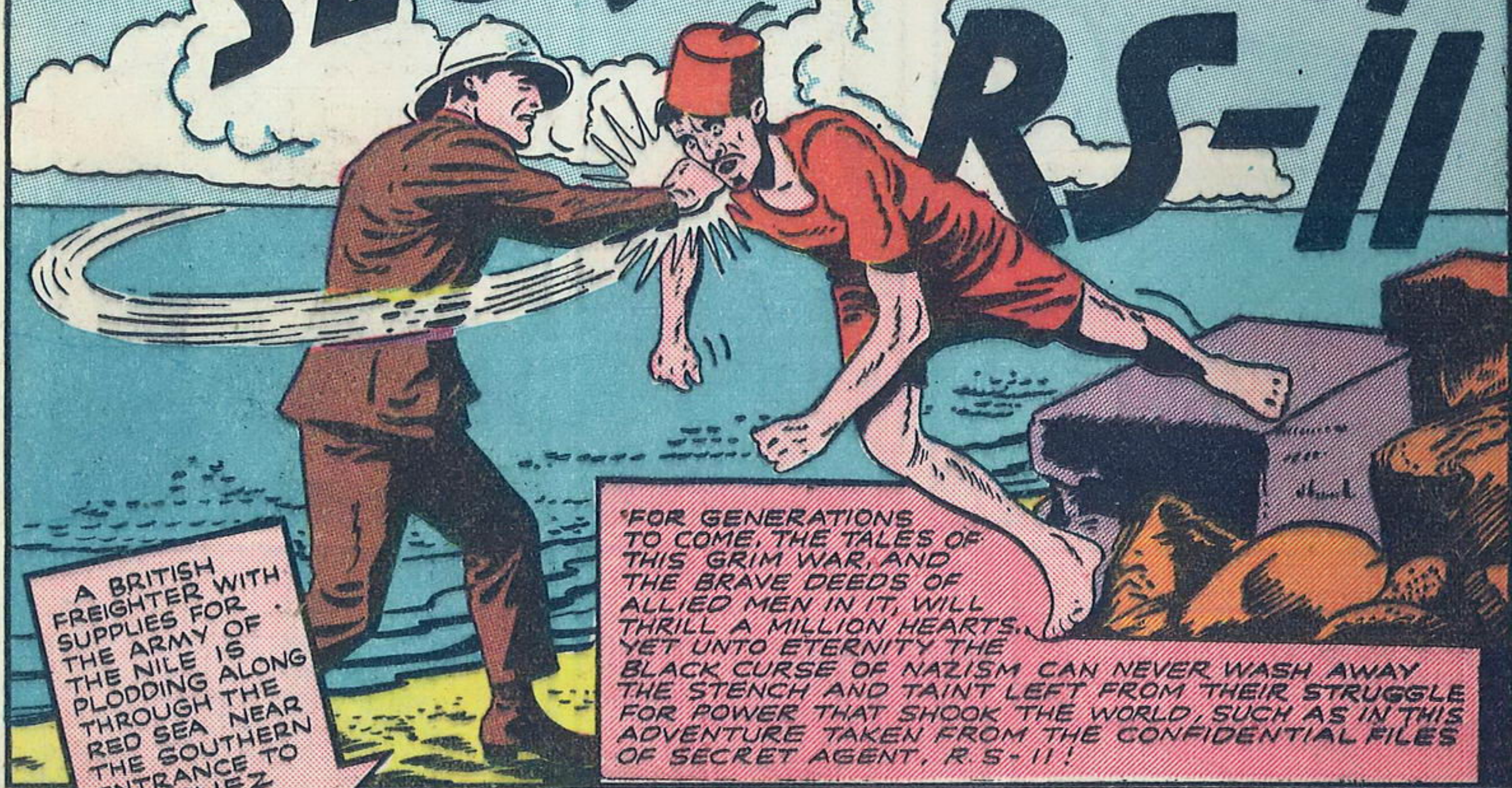
WHEN I RETURNED TO TOWN, IT WAS FOR AN ANTIDOTE TO THAT POISON. THAT'S WHAT I JUST GAVE CLAUDE. SHE WAS OUT TO GET ME, TOO, SO I SET A TRAP FOR HER.. IT WAS A TIGHT SPOT THOUGH, UNTIL I FOUND MY DISINTEGRATOR! SHE'LL NEVER RETURN.. I GUARANTEE THAT!

THANK HEAVENS! HE'S BROKEN THE FAMILY CURSE!

WELL, I'LL BE!

GRAVES THE GHOST HUNTER, SOLVES ANOTHER WEIRD CRIME OF THE SUPERNATURAL IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF **CROWN** Comics!

SECRET AGENT R S-II



A BRITISH FREIGHTER WITH SUPPLIES FOR THE ARMY OF THE NILE IS PLODDING ALONG THROUGH THE RED SEA NEAR THE SOUTHERN ENTRANCE TO THE SUEZ CANAL.

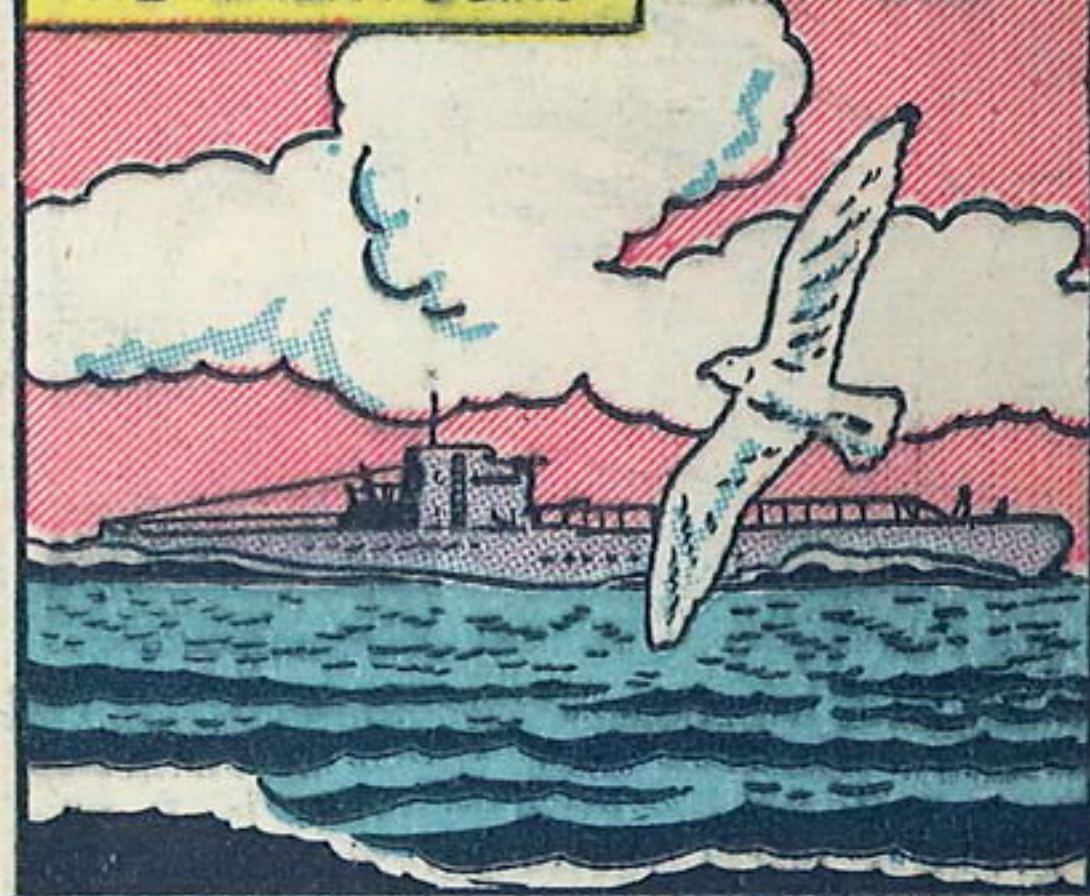
FOR GENERATIONS TO COME, THE TALES OF THIS GRIM WAR, AND THE BRAVE DEEDS OF ALLIED MEN IN IT, WILL THRILL A MILLION HEARTS. YET UNTO ETERNITY THE BLACK CURSE OF NAZISM CAN NEVER WASH AWAY THE STENCH AND TAINT LEFT FROM THEIR STRUGGLE FOR POWER THAT SHOOK THE WORLD, SUCH AS IN THIS ADVENTURE TAKEN FROM THE CONFIDENTIAL FILES OF SECRET AGENT, R S-II!

SUDDENLY...

NAZI
SUBMARINE
TO STARBOARD!



THE LONG SLIM HULL OF A U-BOAT EMERGES FROM THE CALM SEA.



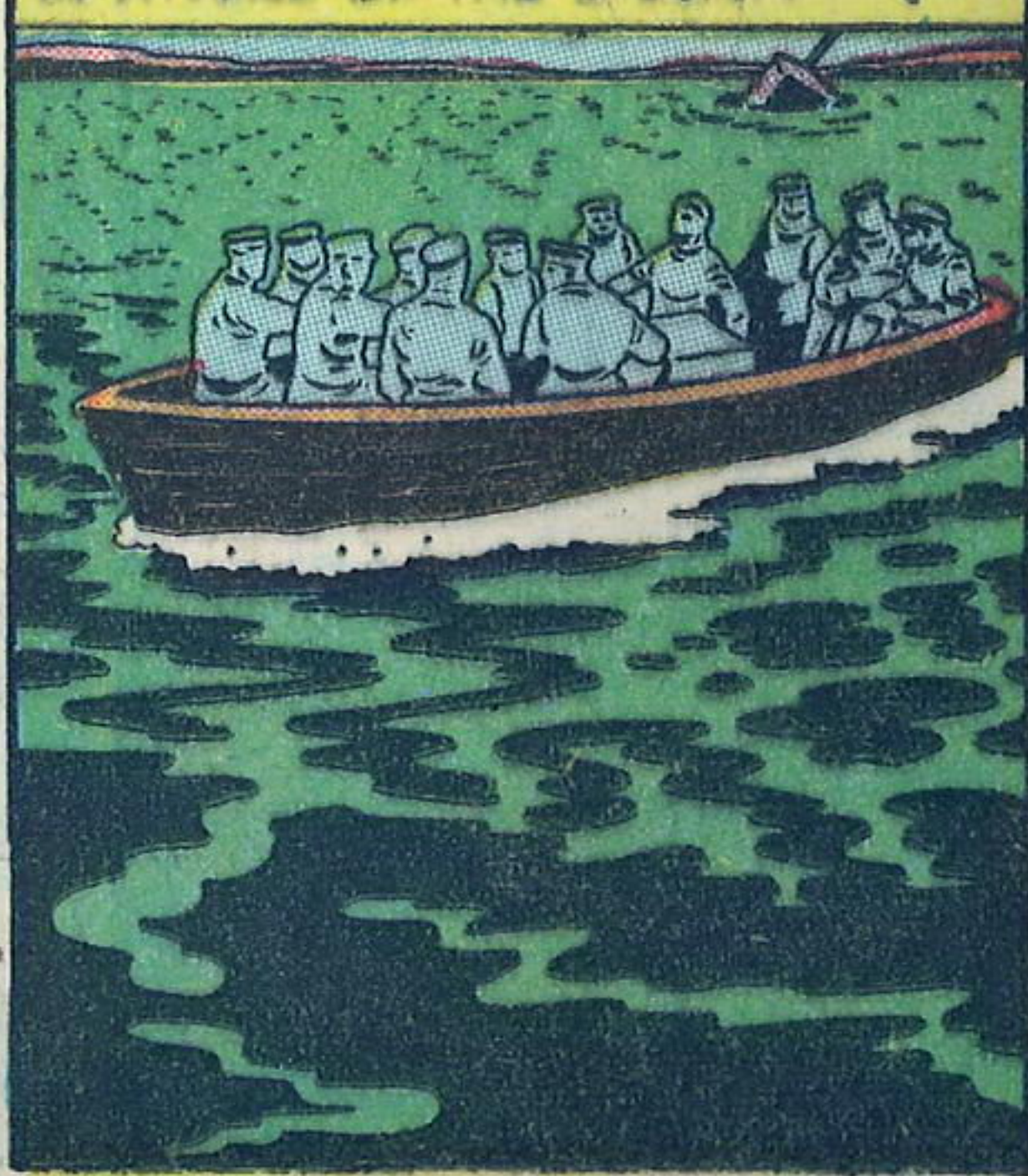
ALERT AND READY, THE GUN CREW OF THE FREIGHTER GOES SWIFTLY INTO ACTION.

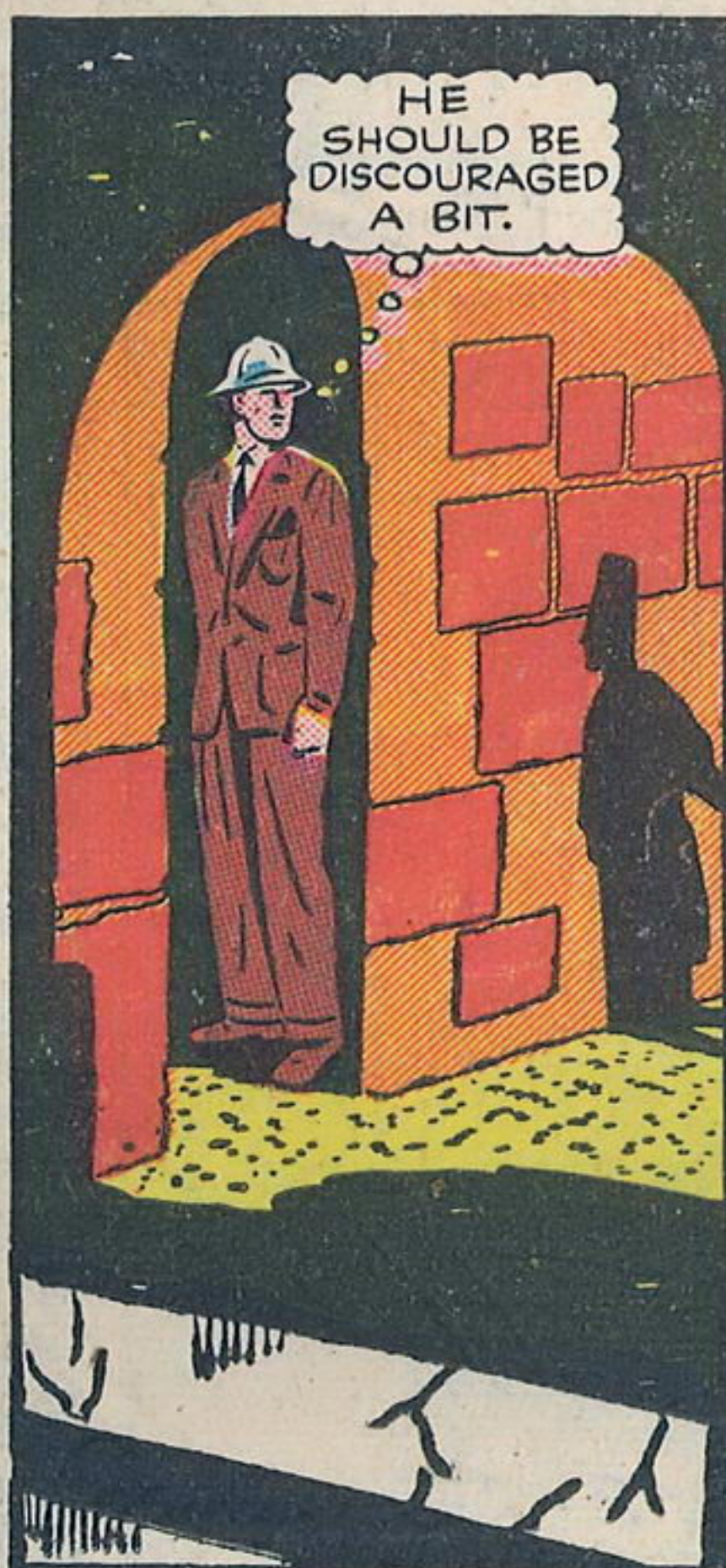
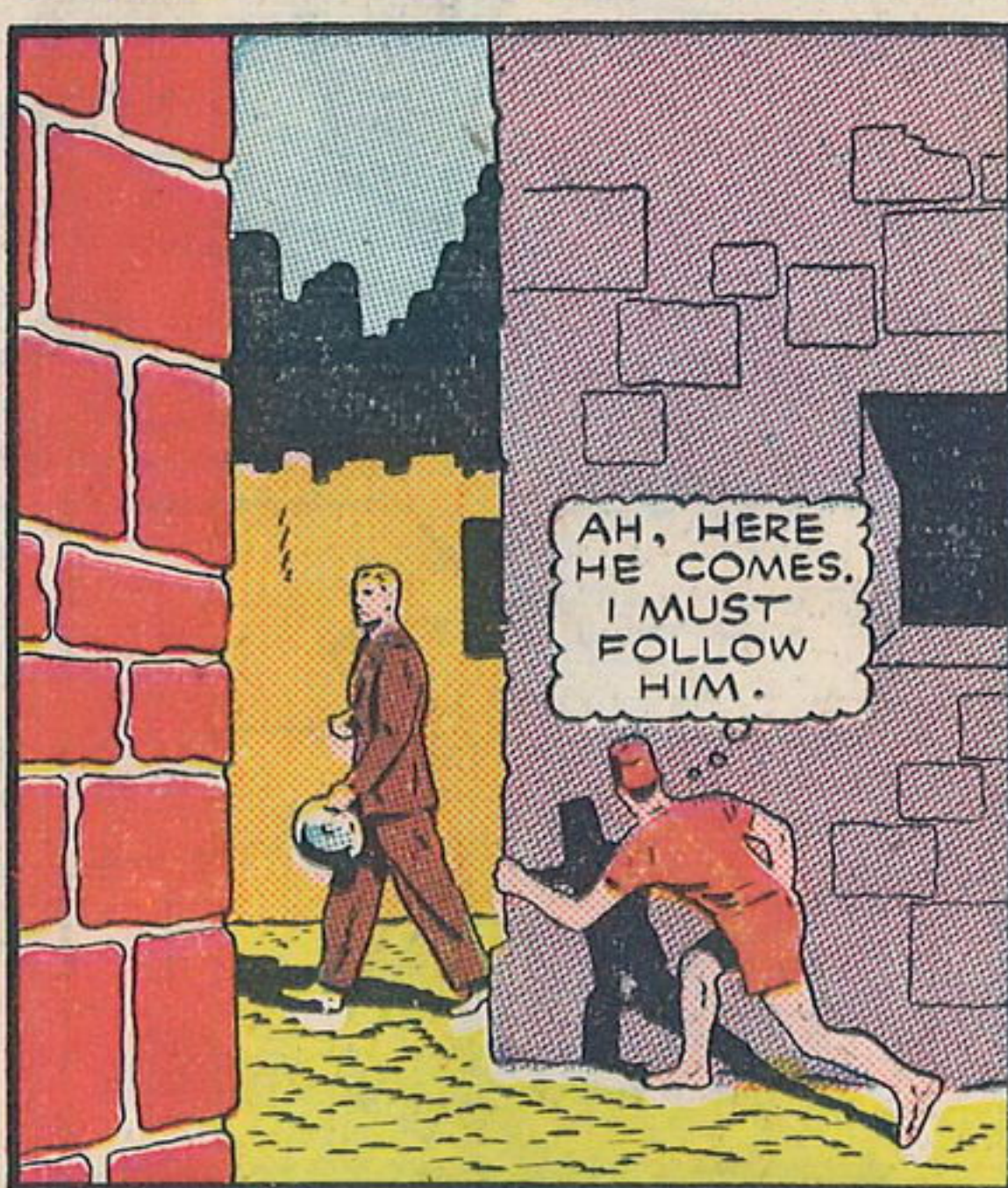
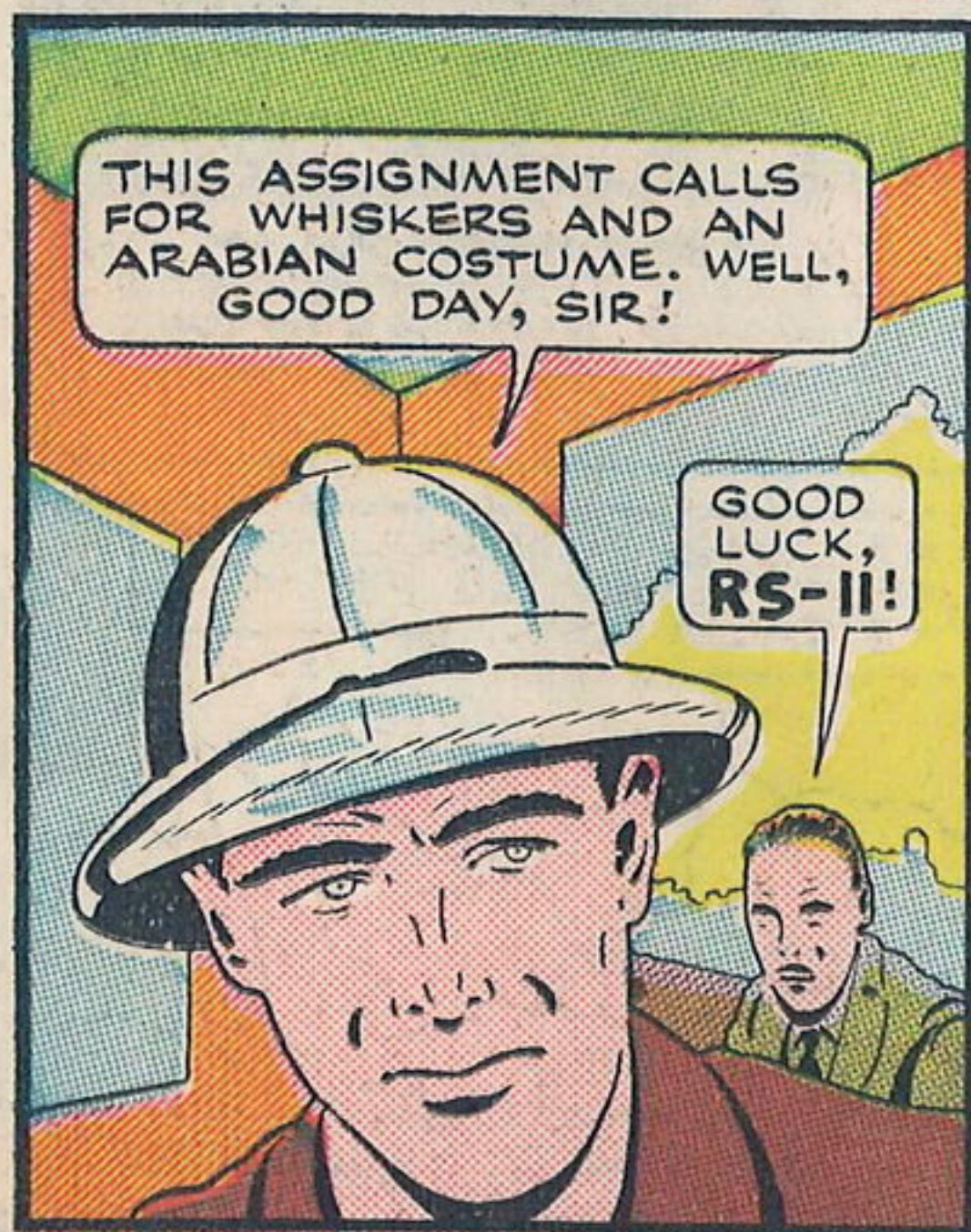


A SHELL BURSTS NEAR ENOUGH TO THE NAZI CRAFT TO CRUSH ITS FRAIL DELICATE MECHANISMS.



BUT A STRANGE THING HAPPENS, FROM THE ARABIAN SHORE COMES A POWERED LIFEBOAT TO PICK UP SURVIVORS OF THE U-BOAT.





SEVERAL DAYS LATER RS-II, DISGUISED AS AN ARAB, HAS MADE HIS WAY DOWN THE HEJAZ COAST IN SEARCH OF THE NAZI SUBMARINE CREW.

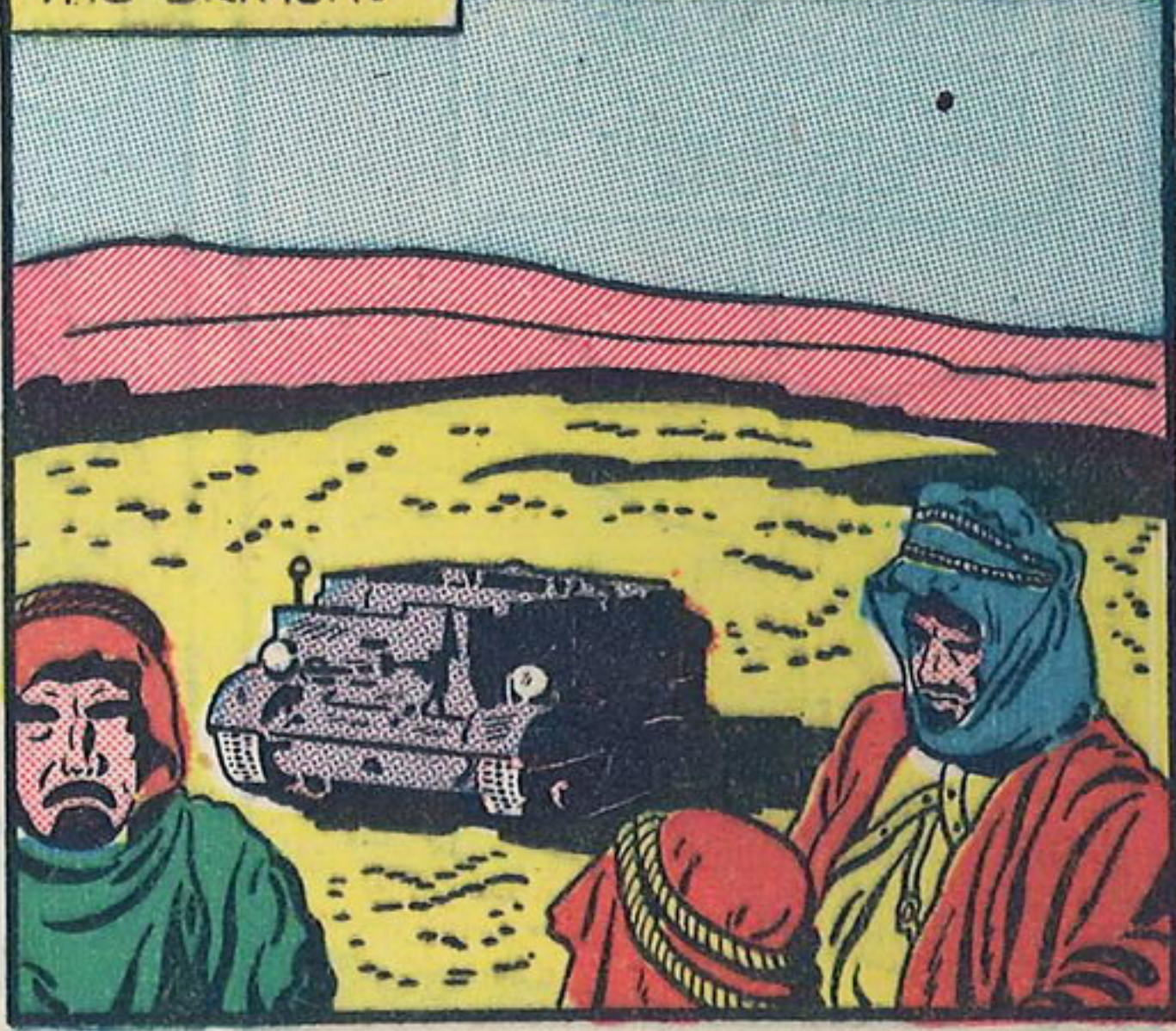


SUDDENLY...

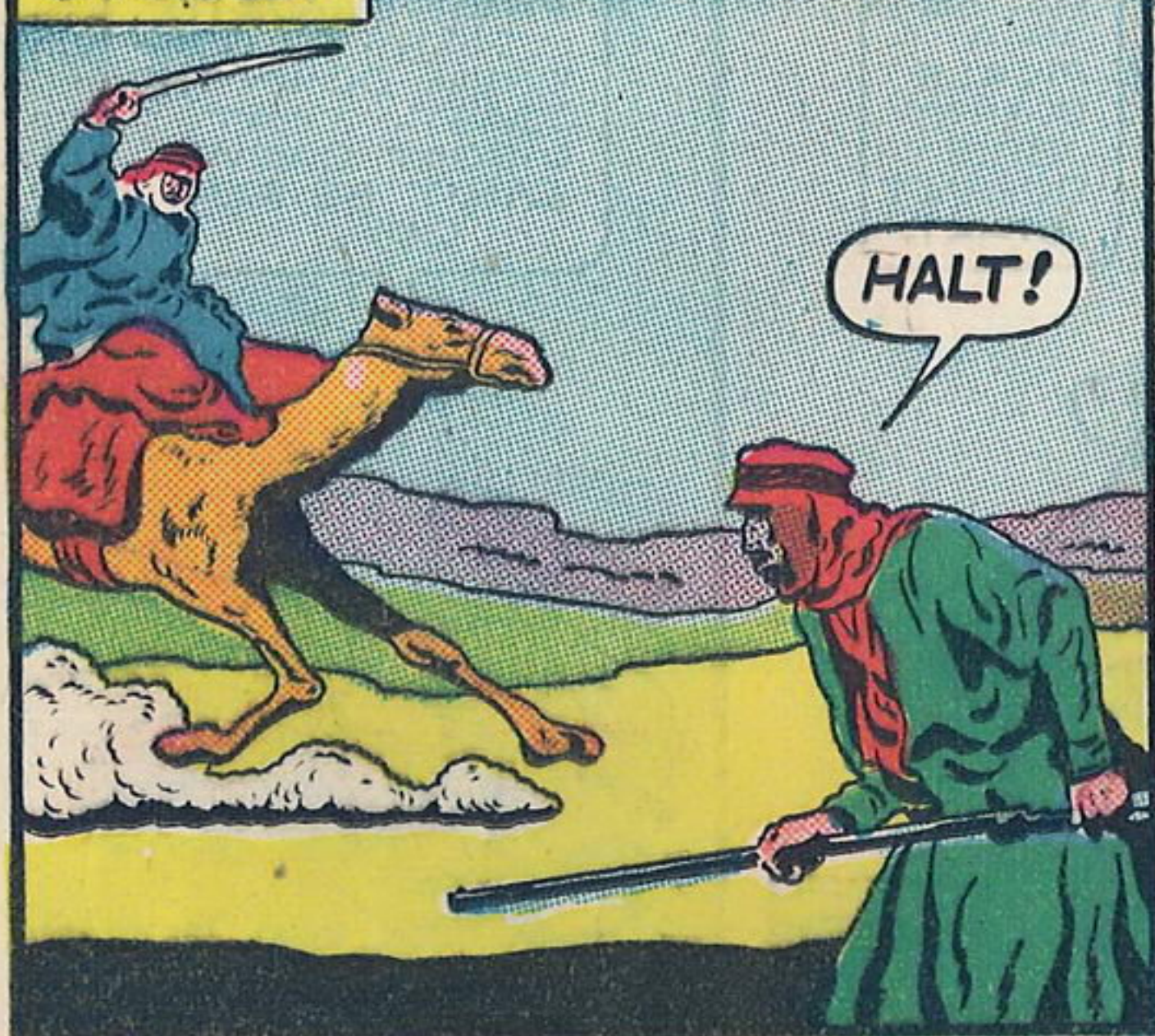
UH-OH! WHAT'S THAT AHEAD?



RS-II'S KEEN EYES MAKE OUT A BAND OF ARABS IN THE DISTANCE. SEVERAL BREN GUN CARRIERS, EVIDENTLY CAPTURED, REVEAL THEM AS ENEMIES OF THE BRITISH.



RS-II APPROACHES SLOWLY TO AVOID SUSPICION. WHEN CLOSE, HE SUDDENLY CHARGES.



BUT HIS FAITHFUL CAMEL IS SHOT FROM BENEATH HIM.

THAT BREN GUN CARRIER IS MY ONLY CHANCE.



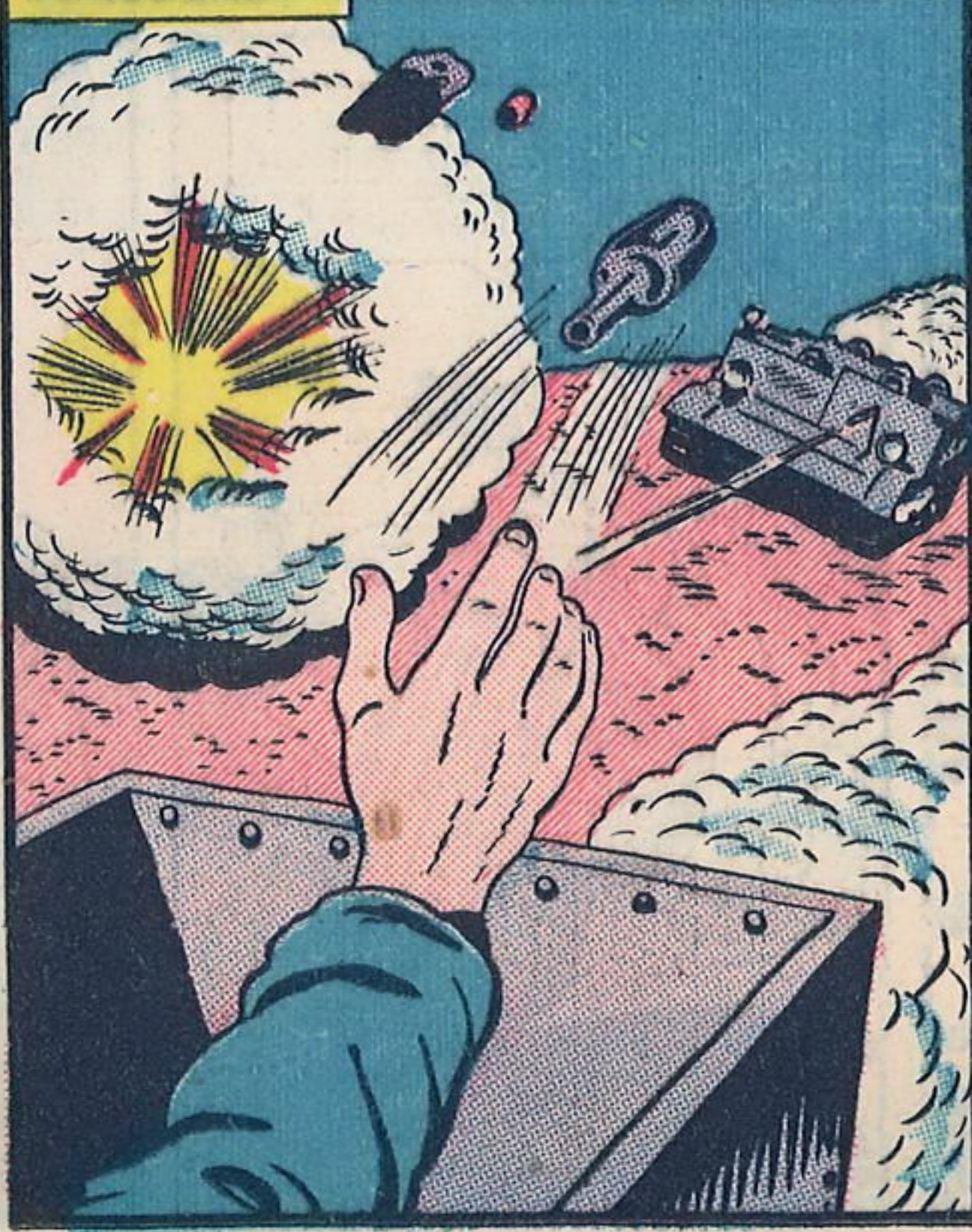
MADE IT!



WITH THE ARABS BUT A TANK-LENGTH BEHIND, RS-II MAKES A BOLD DASH FOR FREEDOM.



UNABLE TO MAN THE GUNS AND DRIVE AT THE SAME TIME, RS-II HURLS BOTTLES OF GASOLINE AT HIS PURSUERS.

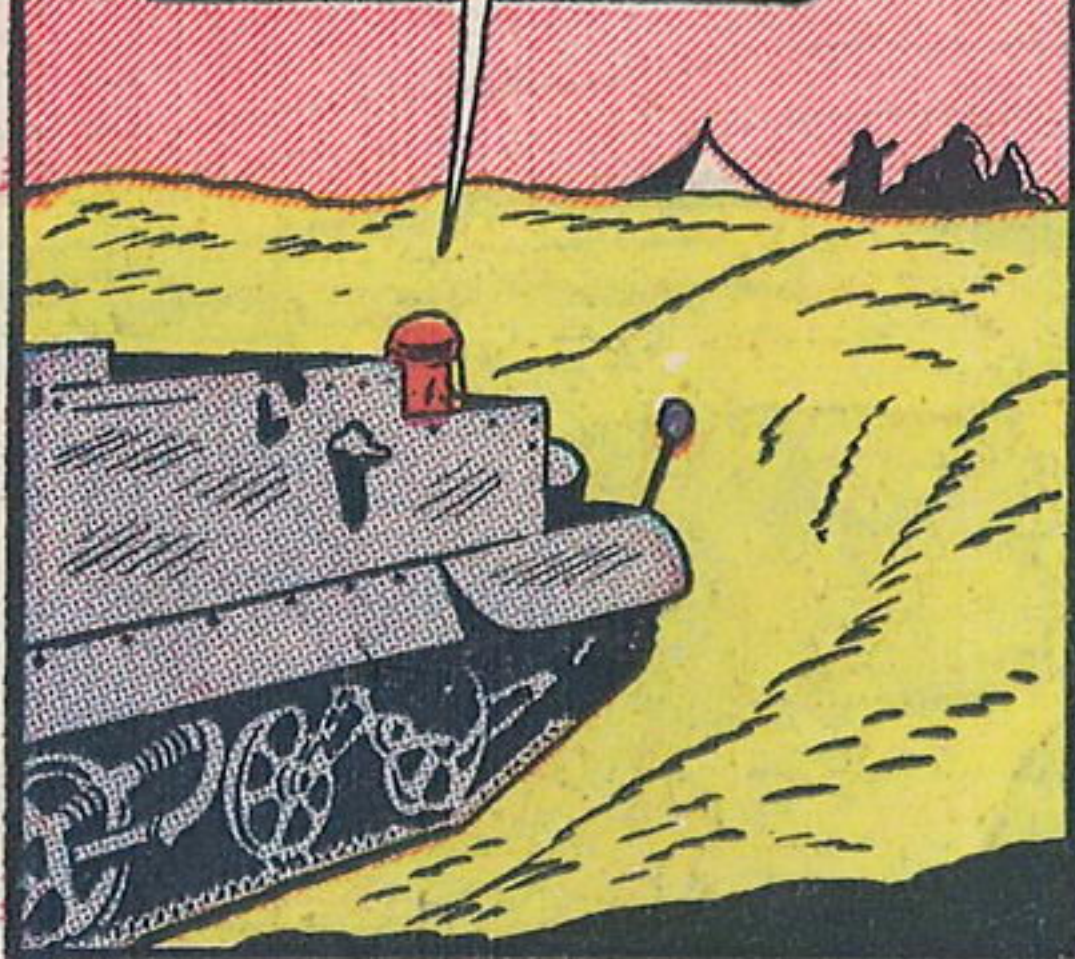


SO LONG, LADS, I'LL SEND YOU A POST CARD WHEN I GET BACK TO PORT SAID!

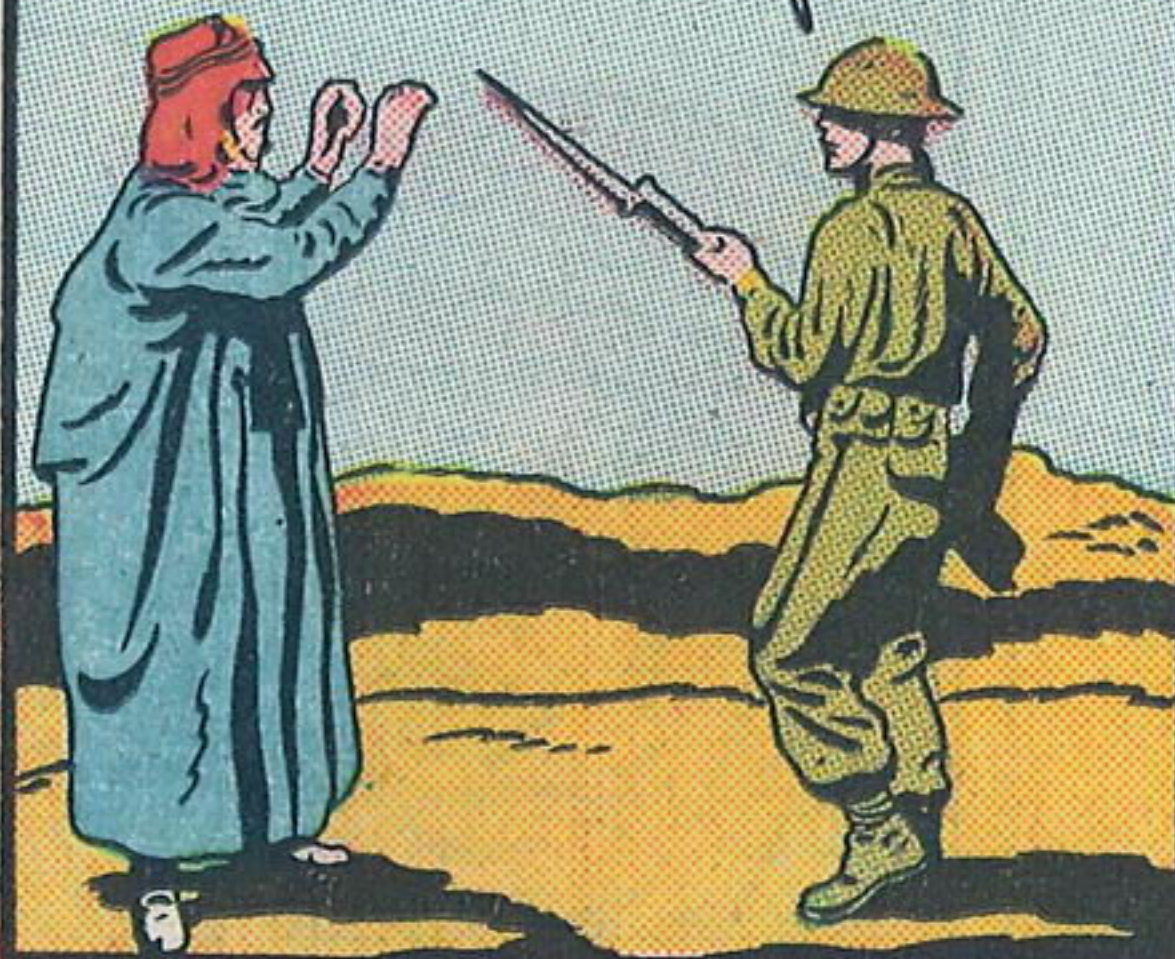


LATER.

LOOKS LIKE A BRITISH PATROL UP AHEAD... I CAN'T REVEAL MY IDENTITY SO I'LL JUST HAVE TO SUBMIT TO CAPTURE!



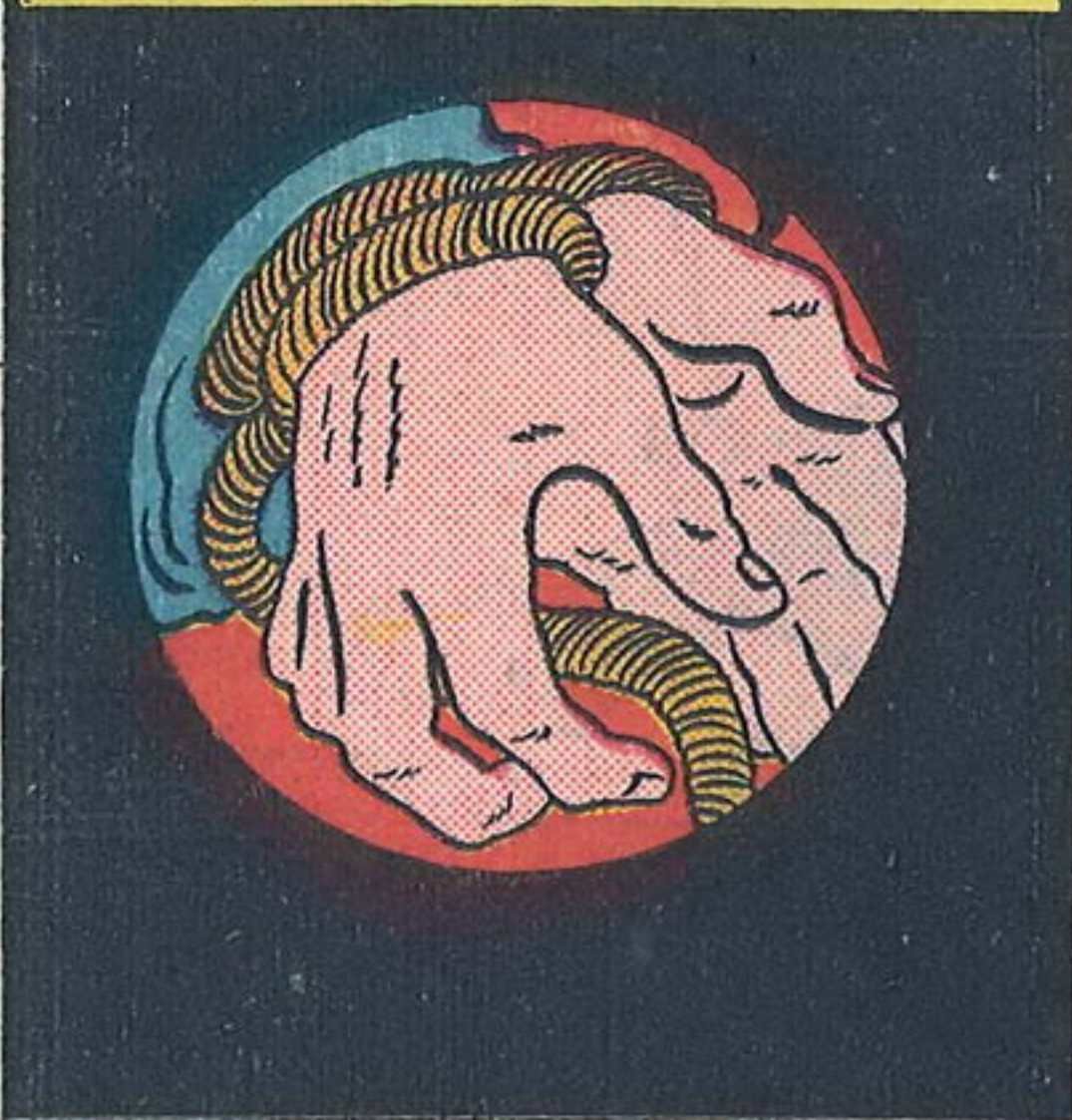
UNTIL YOU CAN EXPLAIN WHAT YOU WERE DOING WITH A BRITISH TANK, I MUST TIE YOU UP UNTIL WE RETURN TO OUR BASE!



THAT'S A GOOD ONE ON ME. I ESCAPE FROM THE ARABS ONLY TO BE CAPTURED BY MY OWN MEN. ... HELLO, IS THAT A MOTORCYCLE OVER THERE? ... M-M-M.



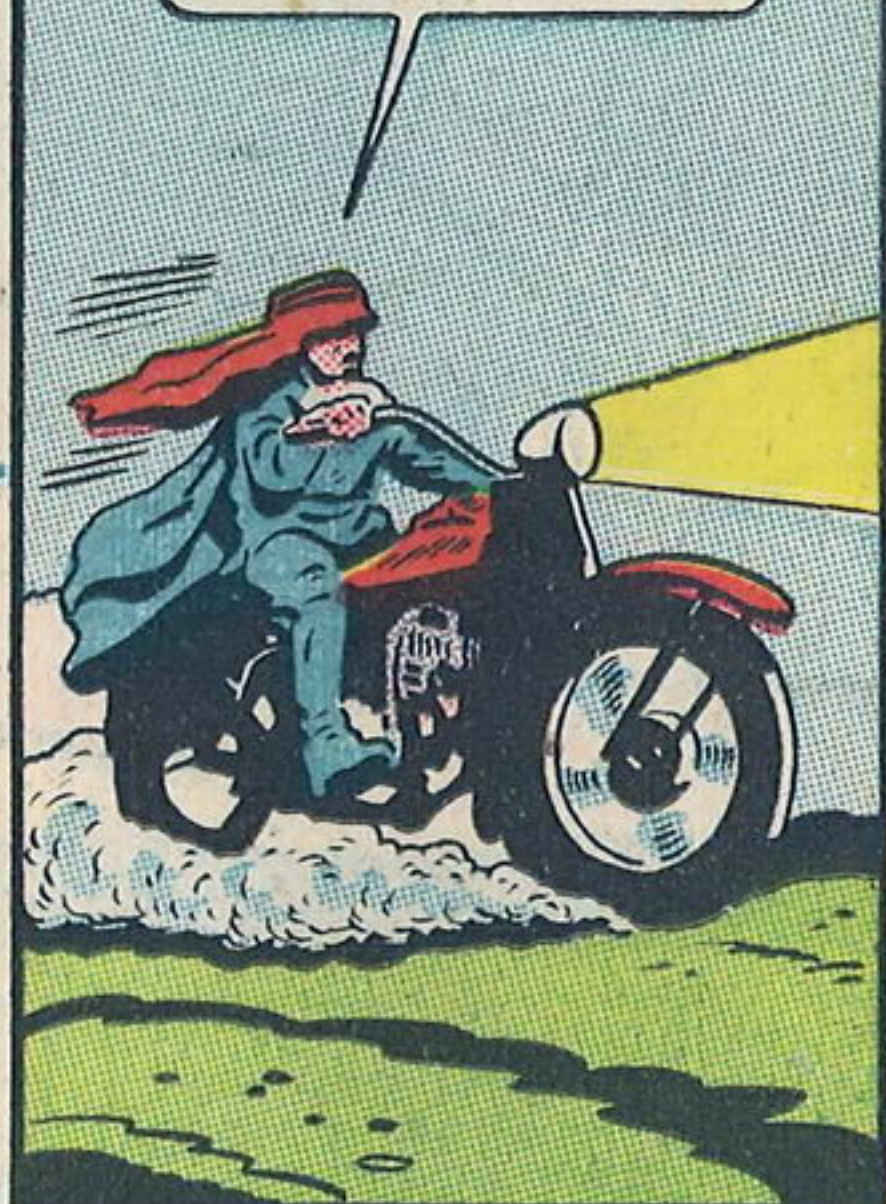
TO RS-II'S POWERFUL WRISTS THE ROPE WITH WHICH HE IS BOUND IS LIKE A THIN PIECE OF STRING.



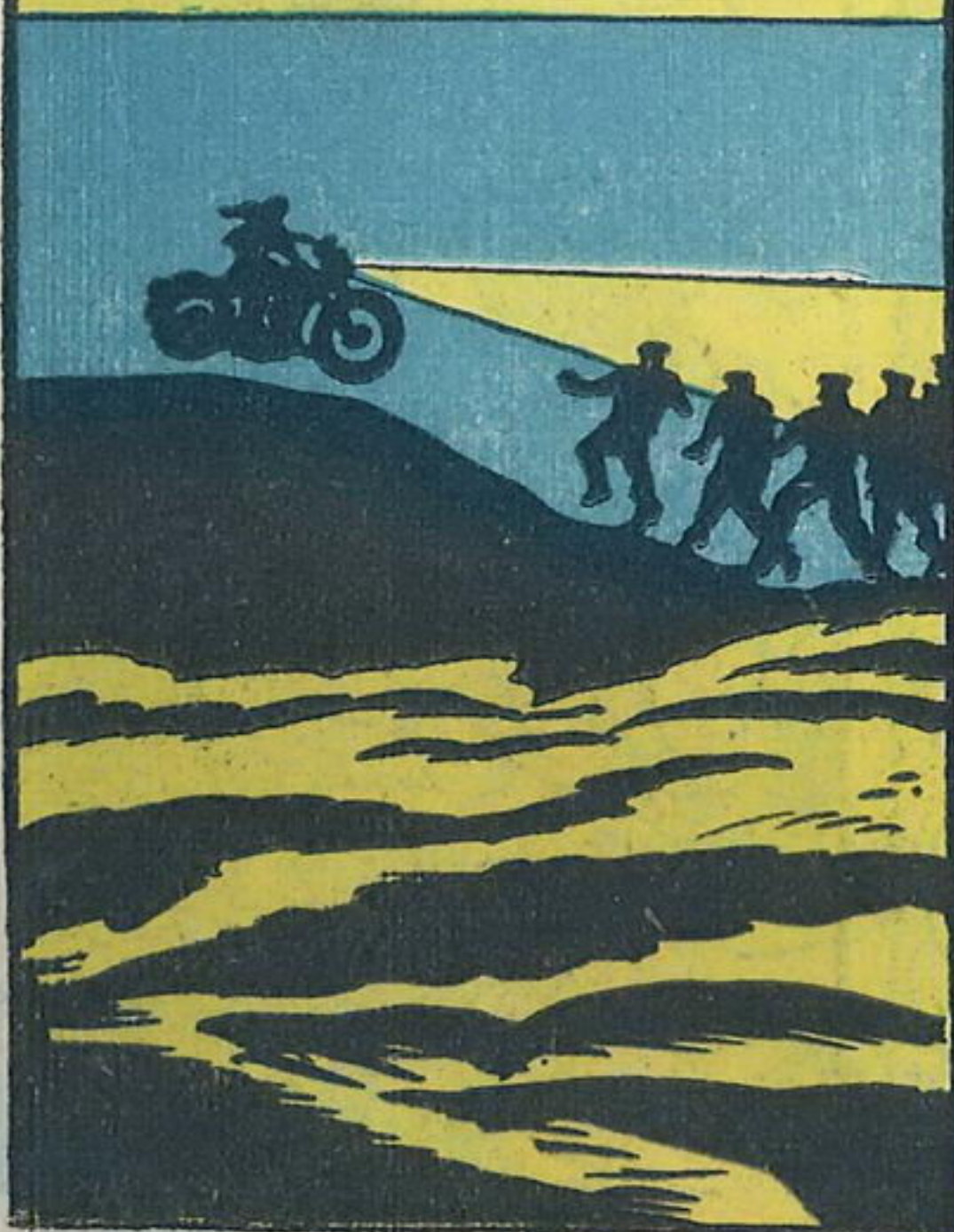
I'LL BE IN A PICKLE IF THAT BIKE DOESN'T START.



PHEW! MADE IT! ... NOW TO CONTINUE DOWN THE COAST. THAT U-BOAT CREW CAN'T BE FAR OFF.



LATER THAT NIGHT RS-II SUDDENLY COMES UPON A GROUP OF FIGURES IN THE DARKNESS. HIS HEADLIGHT REVEALS THEIR UNIFORMS — NAZI SEAMEN! THEY ARE TOO SURPRISED BY THE FIGURE FLASHING PAST THEM FROM OUT OF THE DARKNESS TO ACT.



WHAT LUCK! FOUND THEM! NOW TO REPORT!



ACH! VE HAF BEEN SEEN! VE MUST CARRY OUDT OUR PLANS BEFORE DER ENEMY COMES. ARE DER TWO DHOWS VE CAPTURED READY? ...



JA!

MEANWHILE **RS-II** HAS MADE HIS WAY TO MUWEIA ON THE RED SEA. THERE HE FINDS AN OLD FRIEND, BEN HASSIM, WHO OFFERS TO SAIL HIM ACROSS TO EGYPT IN HIS FAST DHOW.



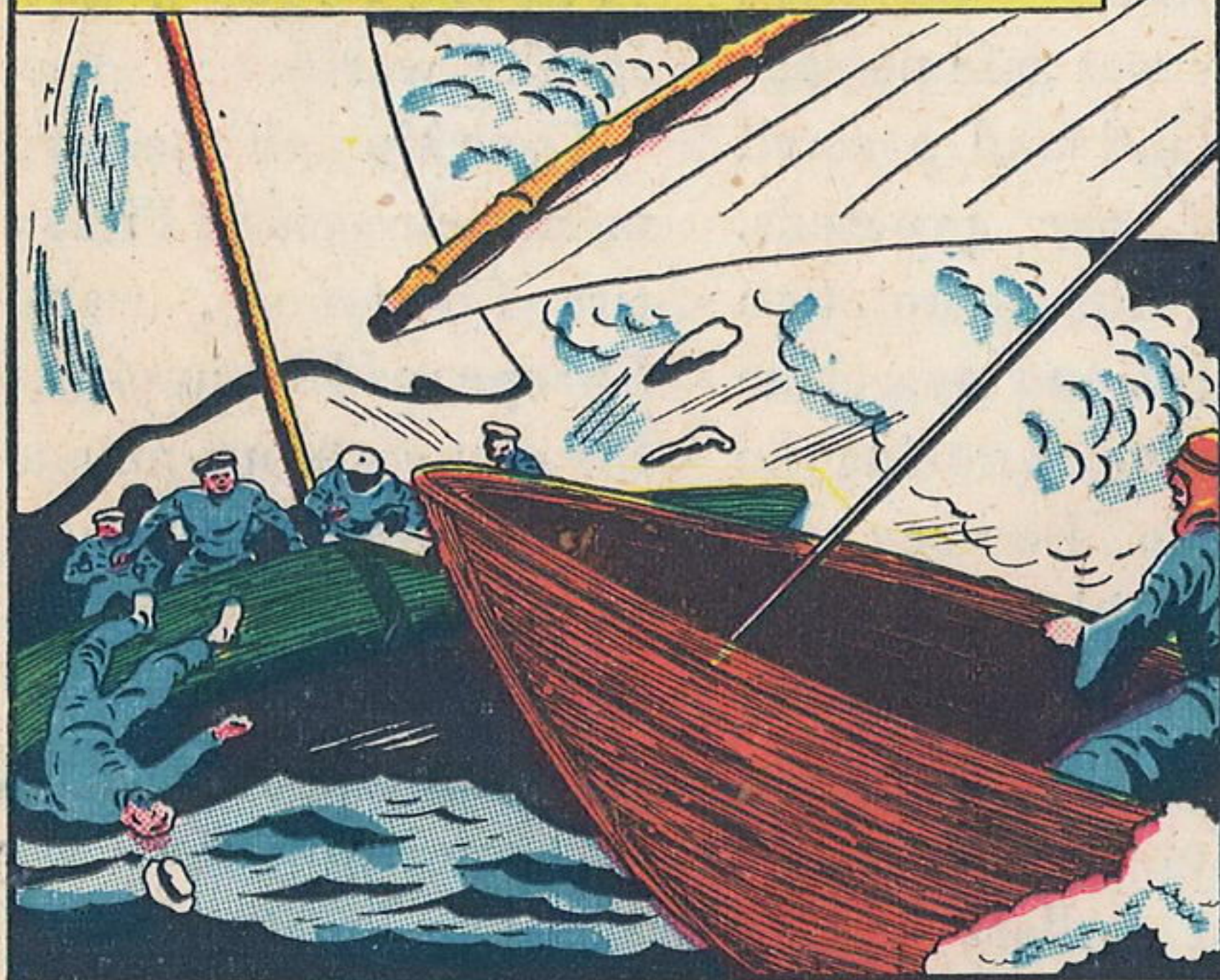
OFFSHORE, THEY COME UPON THE TWO DHOWS FILLED WITH NAZI SEAMEN.



WITHOUT WARNING, THE NAZIS OPEN FIRE.



IN THE FACE OF WITHERING MACHINE GUN FIRE, **RS-II** AND BEN HASSIM RAM THEIR STURDY CRAFT INTO ONE OF THE NAZI DHOWS.



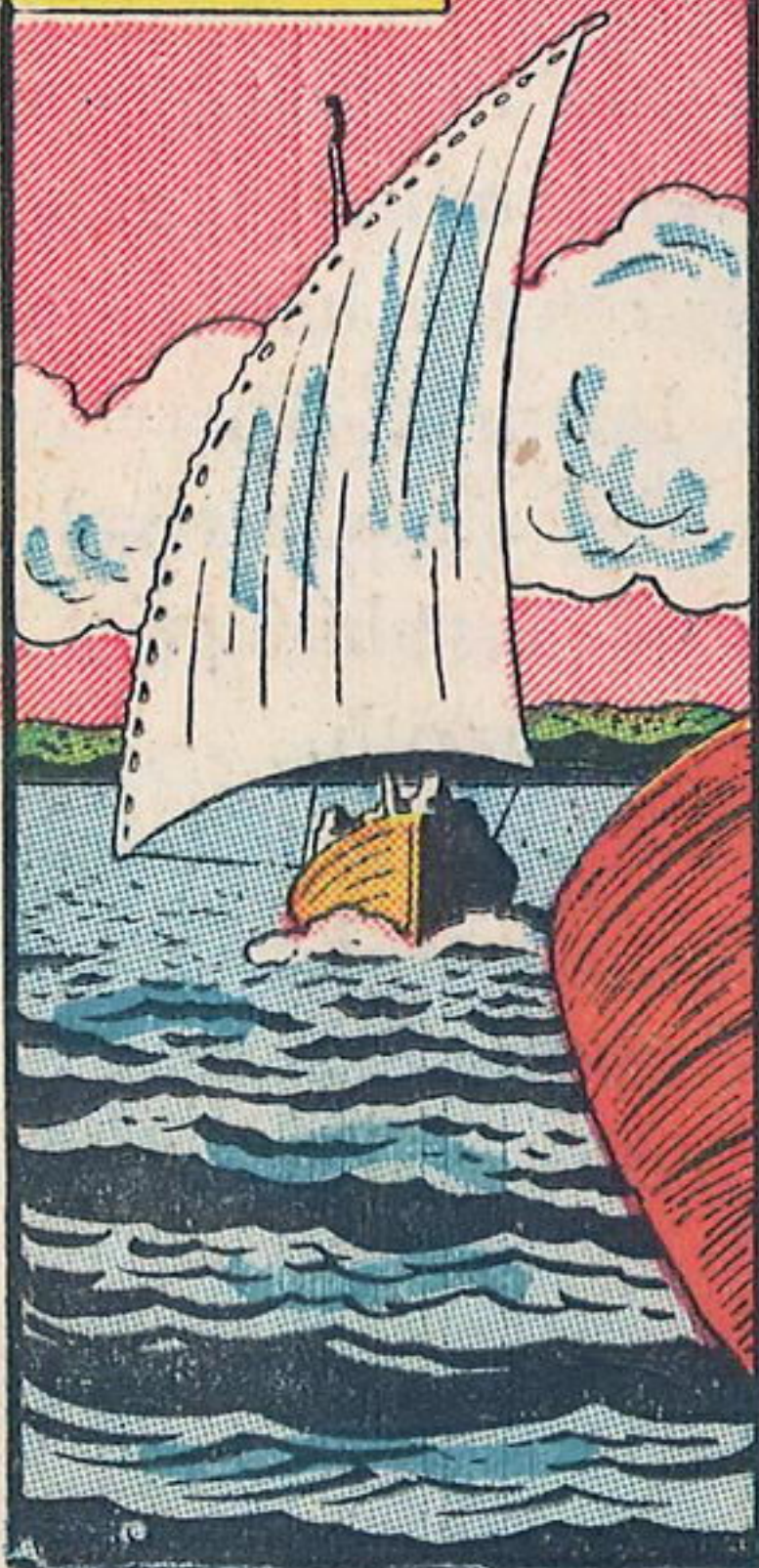
BEN HASSIM TOSSES A FLAMING TORCH AT THE OTHER.



WHICH GOES UP IN SMOKE.



A SMALL FLEET OF DHOWS HURRIES OUT FROM SHORE FOR SURVIVORS.



THE NEXT DAY, BACK AT THE COMMANDER'S OFFICE IN PORT SAID.

I PICKED UP THIS SUSPICIOUS LOOKING CHARACTER ON THE WATERFRONT, SIR!

VERY GOOD. LEAVE HIM ALONE WITH ME!



HA, HA! MY OWN MAN WAS FOOLED BY YOUR DISGUISE, **RS-II**. I HAVE A FULL REPORT ON THAT SUB CREW. GOOD WORK, OLD MAN!

THANK YOU, SIR.



BUY MORE WAR BONDS!

DIAMONDS OF DESTINY

By
CHARLES DEAN

IN the shimmering brilliance of all historical jewels lies a soaring tale of romance and adventure. Changed were the fates of nations and men that sought to own them. War, plunder and murder beat a path to their presence.

One of these famous gems was the Regent diamond, a glistening mountain of color, sparkle and beauty.

It was such a jewel, four hundred and twenty-six carats of splendor, that set Sir Thomas Pitt, British governor of Fort St. George in Madras on the greatest adventure of his life.

Fiction and fact are so closely associated in the background of gems that it is difficult to prove or disprove either, but the Regent diamond is said to have been found in the year 1701, at the Partial mines on the Kistna river.

An Indian slave found the stone that to him

meant the joyful promise of freedom. Cutting a gash in his leg, he secreted it and made his way to the sea coast. There he offered it to the skipper of an English ship. The exchange he asked for was safe passage to free land and a small share of the proceeds. However, the temptation of the diamond overcame the skipper and during the passage to Bombay the slave met with sudden disaster. Then the stone again changed hands, for it was bought for the sum of five thousand dollars by an Indian merchant. It is also rumored that later the English sea-captain destroyed himself in a fit of drunken remorse.

The sly diamond merchant, named Jauerchand, offered the jewel to Pitt, asking two hundred pagodas (or \$360,000) for it, which Pitt was unable to pay. Yet, awed by the size of the stone, his fingers itched to own it. He sent

for the merchant time and time again until the price was brought down to eighty-four thousand dollars. Thus Pitt became possessor of what he believed to be the largest diamond in the world.

Even though the investment represented Pitt's entire fortune, war in Europe made it impossible for any covetous monarch to produce money enough to repurchase the jewel from him. Being unable to leave India himself, he sent his son, Robert, to his agent in London with the gem.

As Robert made the tedious journey, his father worried constantly, for thieves or murderers could easily remove both his son and fortune. There was also the slow arrival of mail to cause him grief for many a month.

However, Robert did arrive safely in London and all England hummed with the news of the fabulous

jewel. Pitt hoped to sell it for over half a million dollars but tales of slander sprang up as to how he came to possess such a wondrous stone.

These tales that breezed through the court circles almost ruined Pitt's reputation, but the unhappy governor was mainly worried over his investment.

Finally the Duke of Orleans, Regent of France during the minority of Louis XV, agreed to purchase the stone for one hundred thirty five thousand pounds (approximately \$637,000). This brought Sir Thomas Pitt home to England where he personally made the trip to Calais. Heavily disguised, he dared not sleep two nights in the same bed, so great was his fear of being attacked for his possession.

Despite the promise of the Duke, Pitt received, in cash, only forty thousand pounds, and was given three boxes of crown jewels as a guarantee for the remainder, but this balance was never paid.

The exacting process of cutting and polishing took two tireless years and

cleavage and dust brought a fortune. Finished, the gem was an inch and a quarter in diameter and weighed one hundred and twenty-eight carats.

Only on special occasions of state did the proud Duke wear the now famous diamond, and then only as a button in his hat.

When Louis XV mounted the throne, the gem graced the coronation crown and its lengthy career in court life began. The beautiful Marie Antoinette flaunted it at a ball. Tucked in a brooch, it held a cluster of white ostrich plumes to her large black hat, the envy of every woman present.

Again, during Napoleon's wars, the diamond came to the front. Over and over again he pawned it to German bankers in exchanged for "horse furniture" (cavalry equipment). From there it went to an Amsterdam banker, Vandenburg, until Napoleon released it again for what seems to be an appeasement of his famous vanity. In 1804, the Little Corporal had it set between the teeth of a crocodile in the hilt of his state

sword, which he wore when he crowned himself Emperor of France at Notre Dame Cathedral.

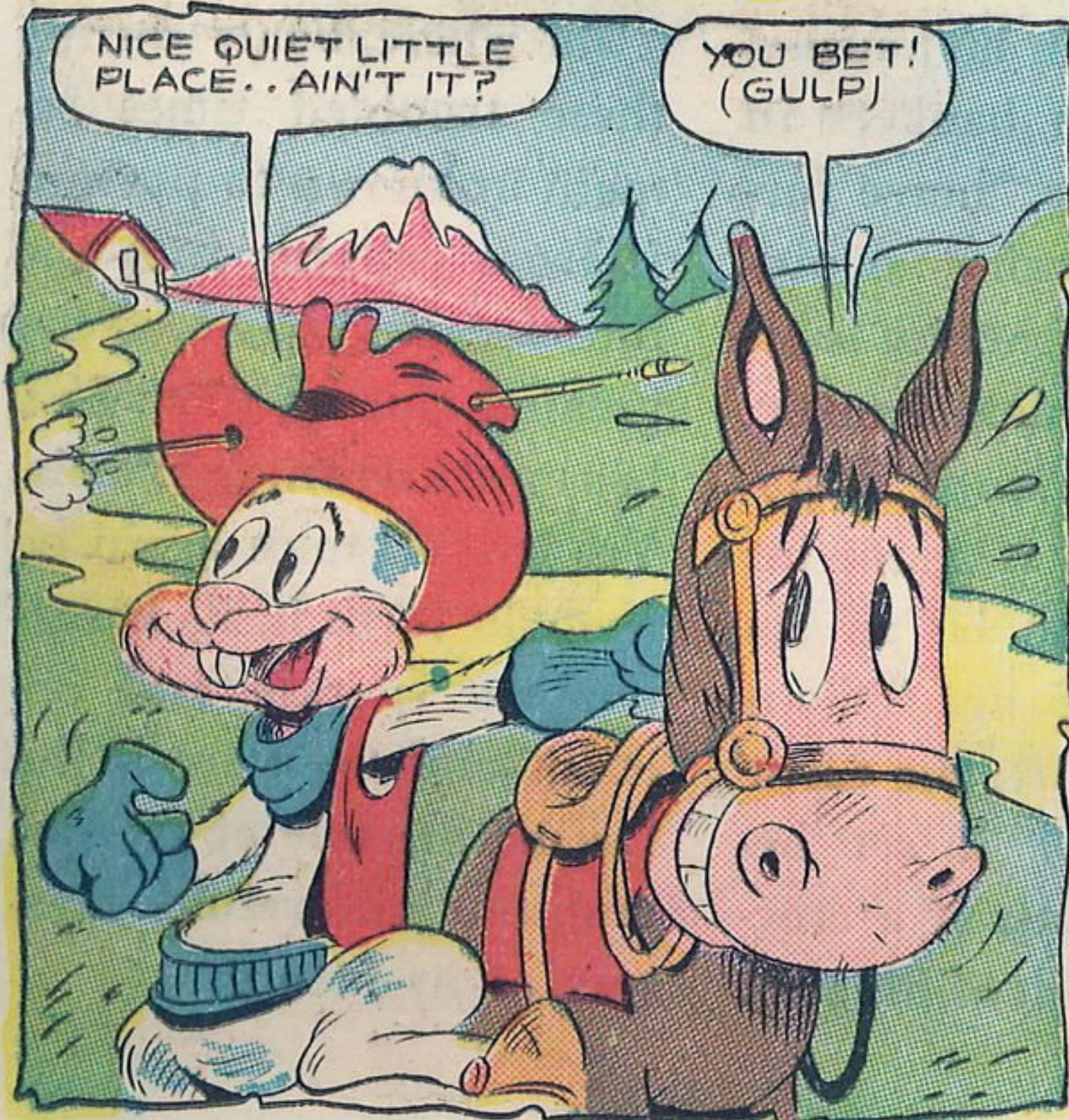
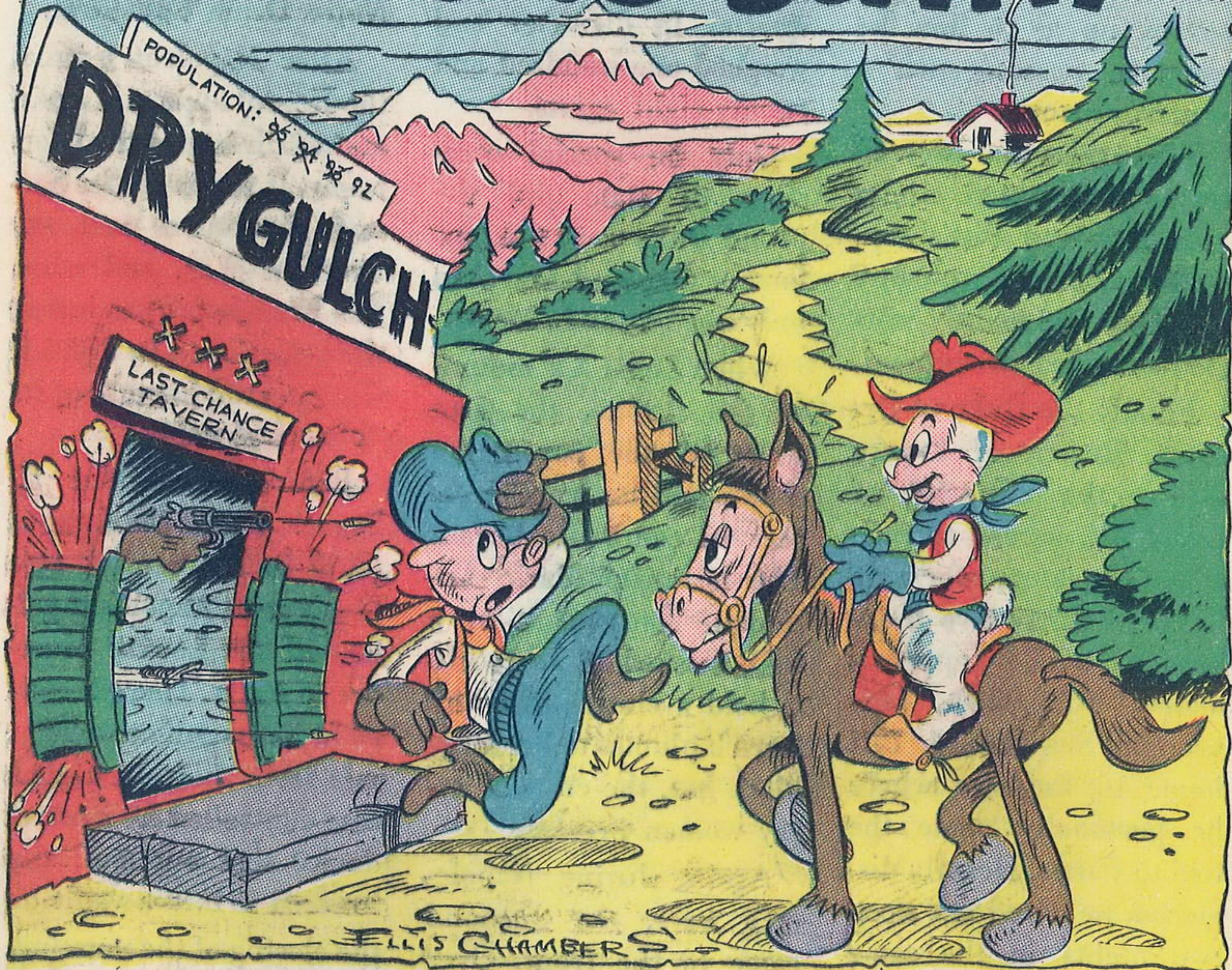
After Napoleon's time, the Regent appeared again and again in political fortunes. It survived the Second Empire and the Prussian War, and when the French crown jewels were auctioned in 1886 it was reserved because of its "historical value."

Before World War II, France placed the famous jewel in the central case of the most important gallery of the Louvre Museum in Paris. There it rested in its magnificent glory, safe from theft, in a glass case controlled by a secret device that automatically lowered it into a vault on the closing of the museum.

Its whereabouts during these troubled times remain unknown to prevent it from slipping into the blood-stained hands of the greatest thieves the world has ever known, the Nazis. Yet it shall once again be brought forth in its homeland to sparkle and enchant and keep fresh the fascinating tale of its past and the unfortold mystery of its future.

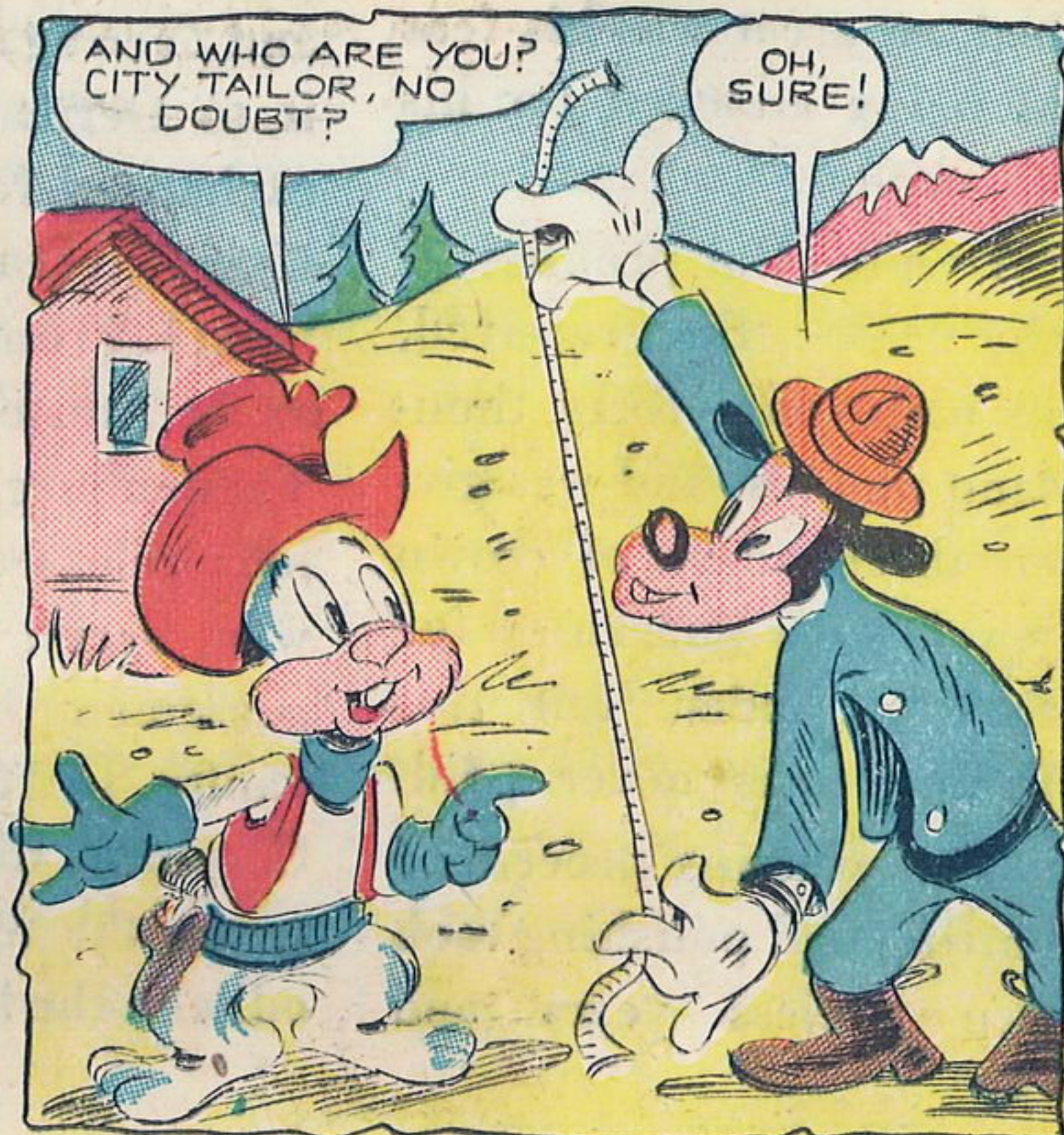
HOPALONG BUNNY

By
Ellis
Chambers



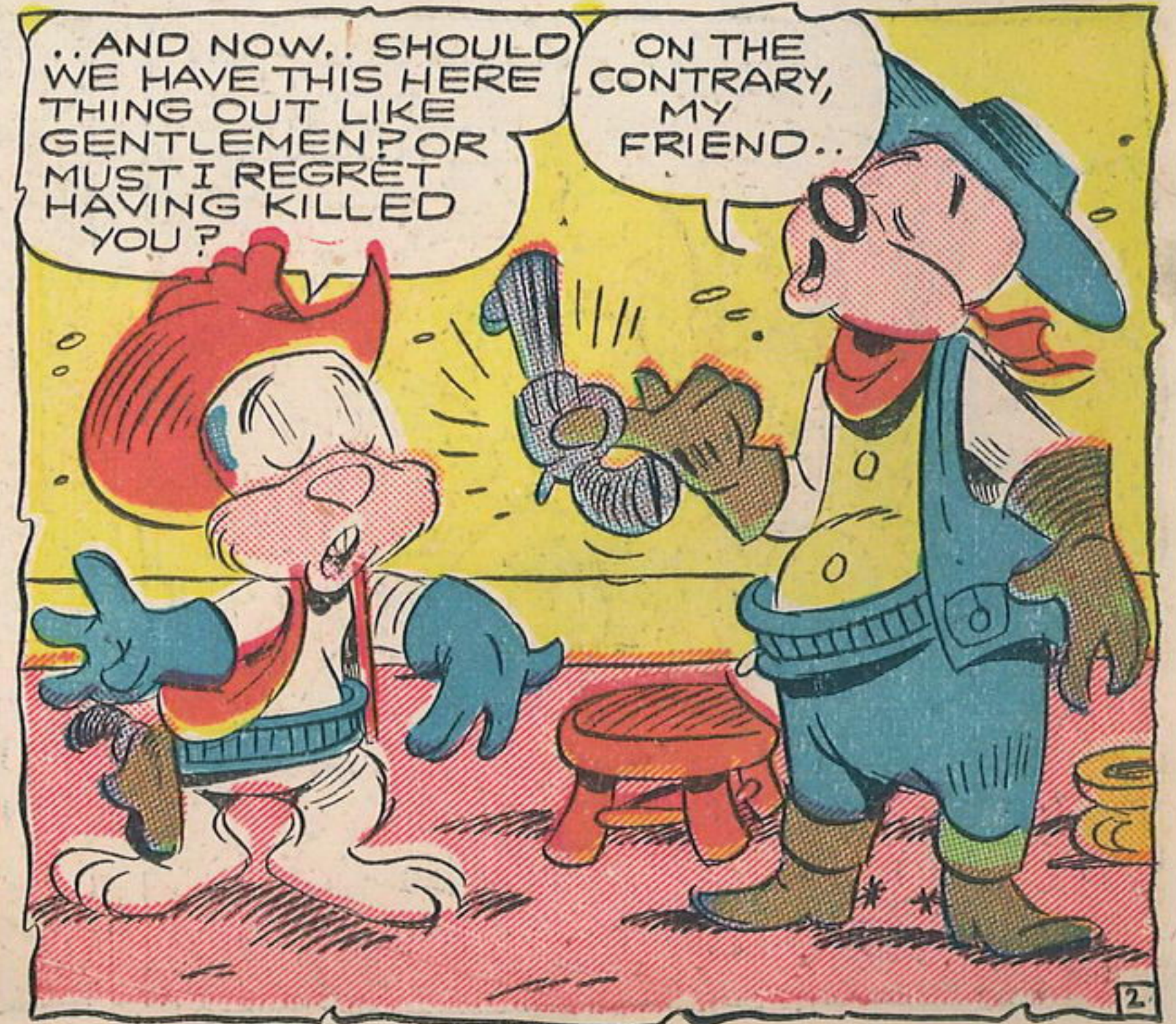
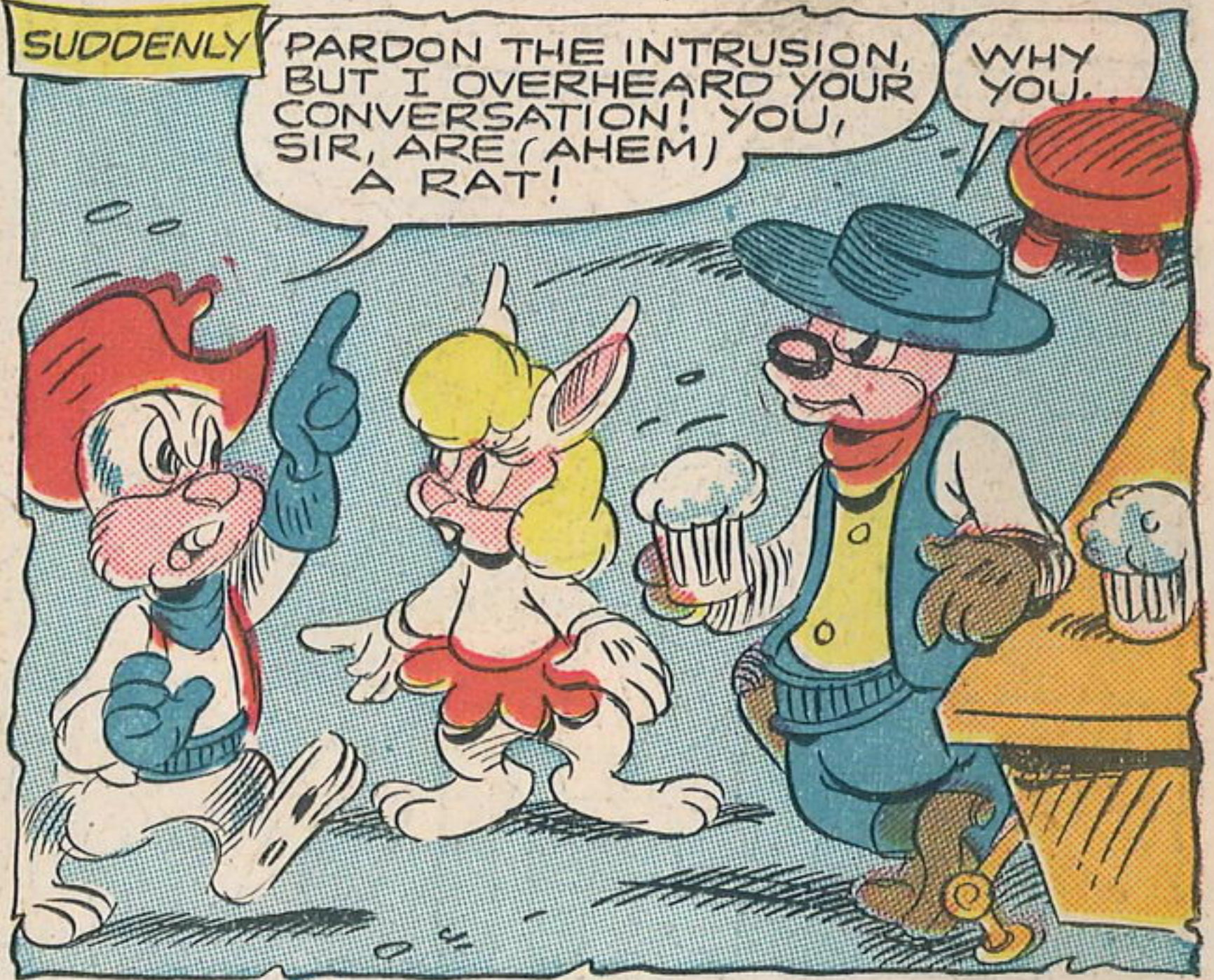
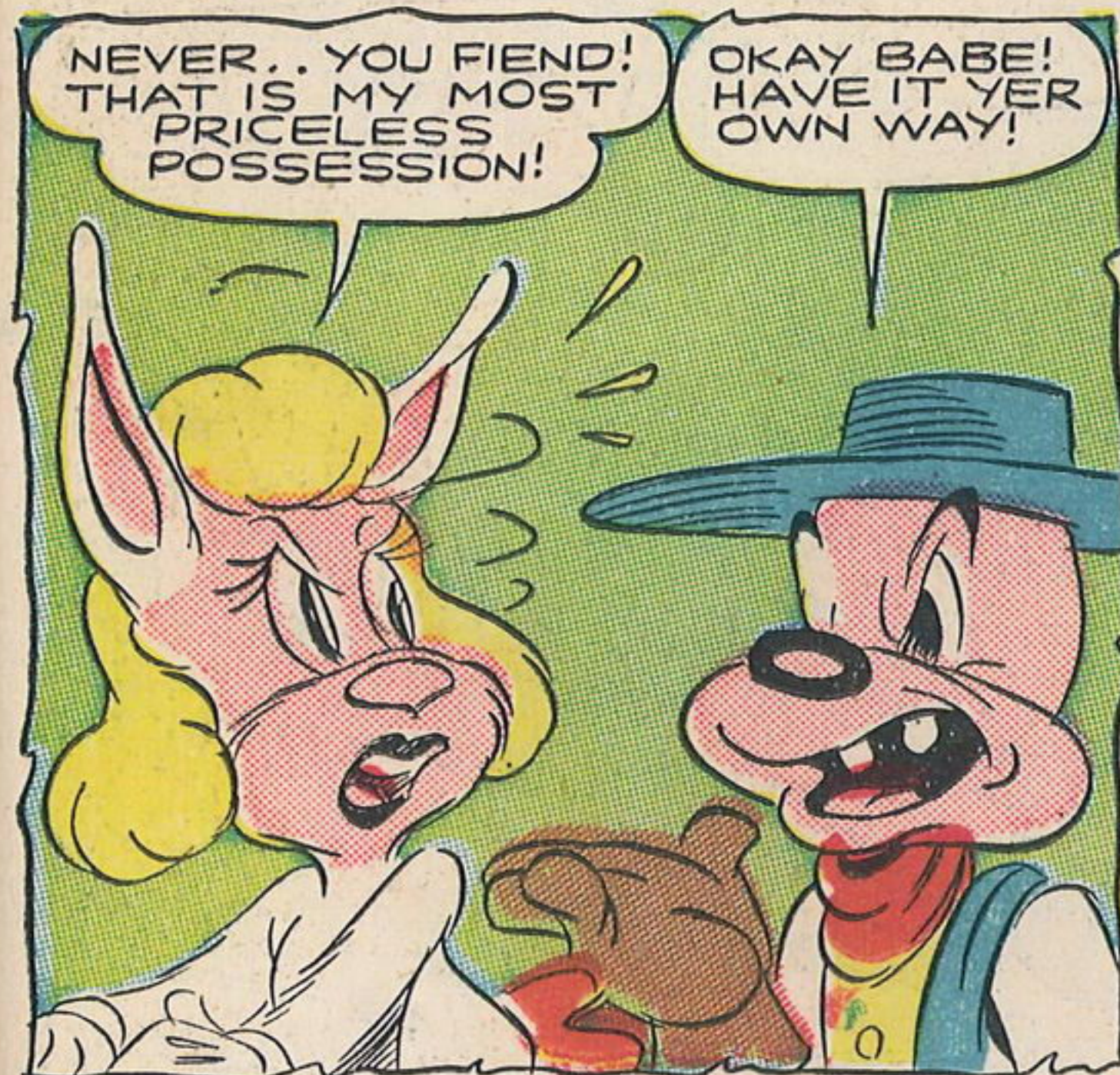
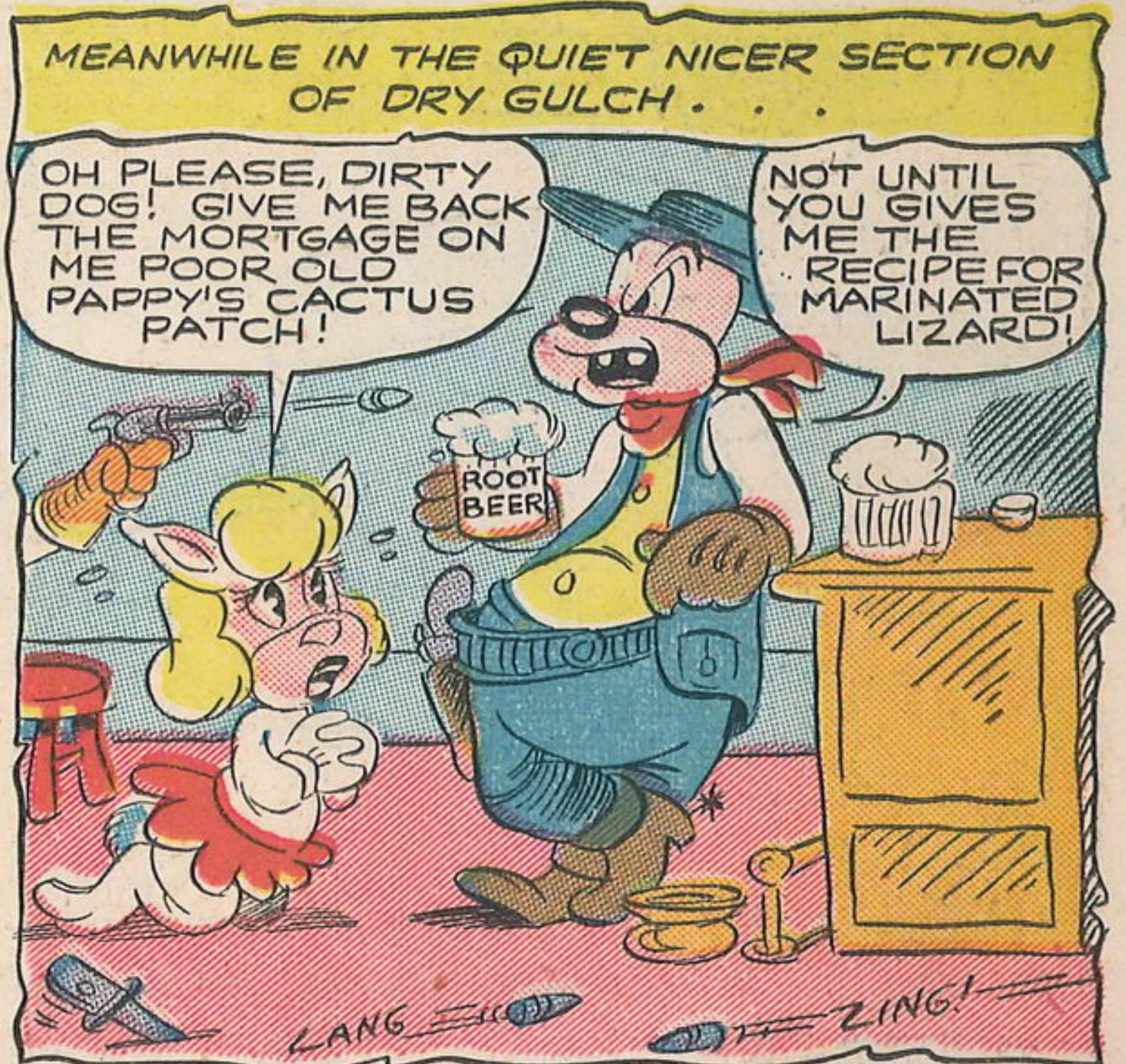
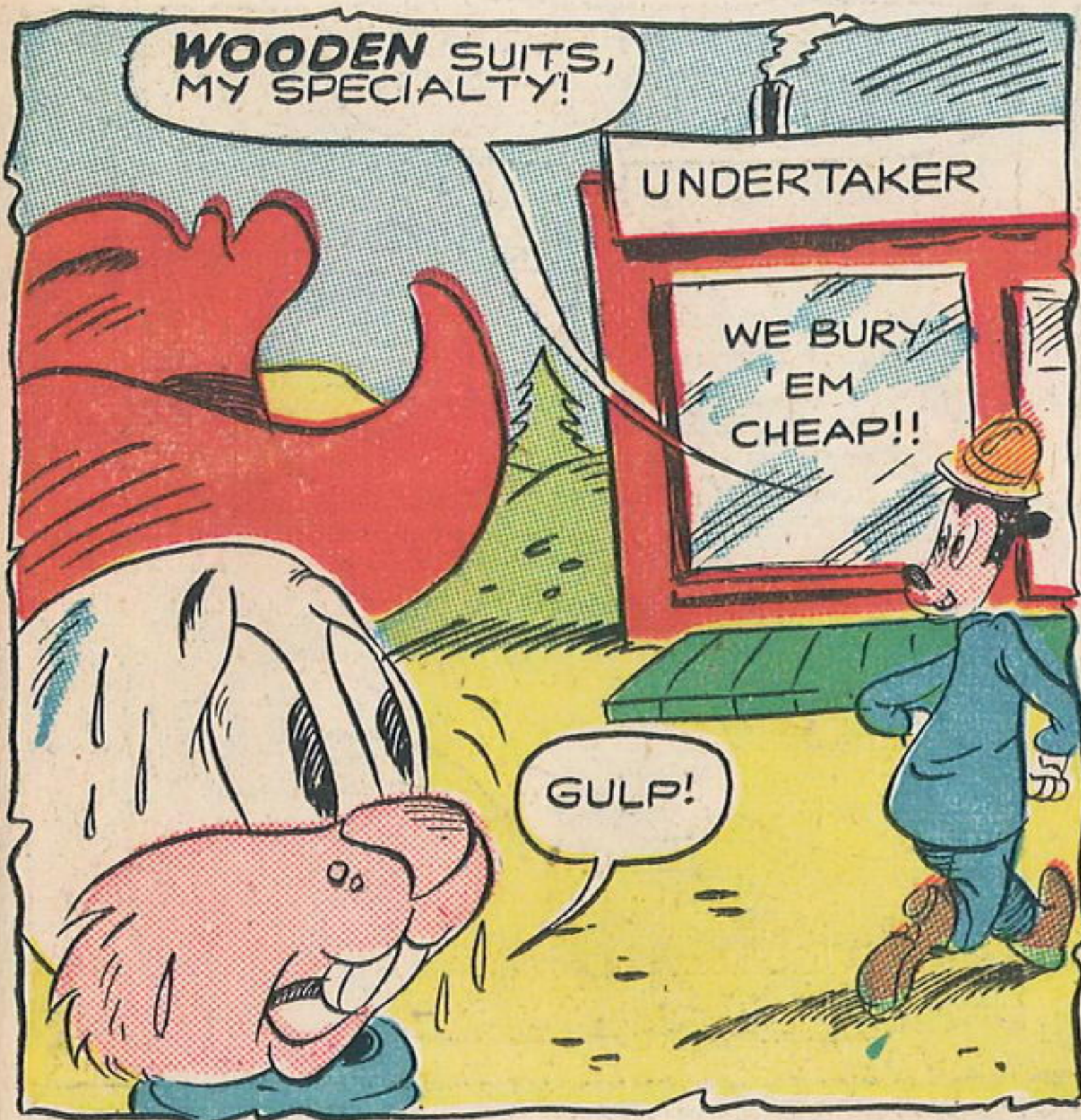
NICE QUIET LITTLE PLACE... AIN'T IT?

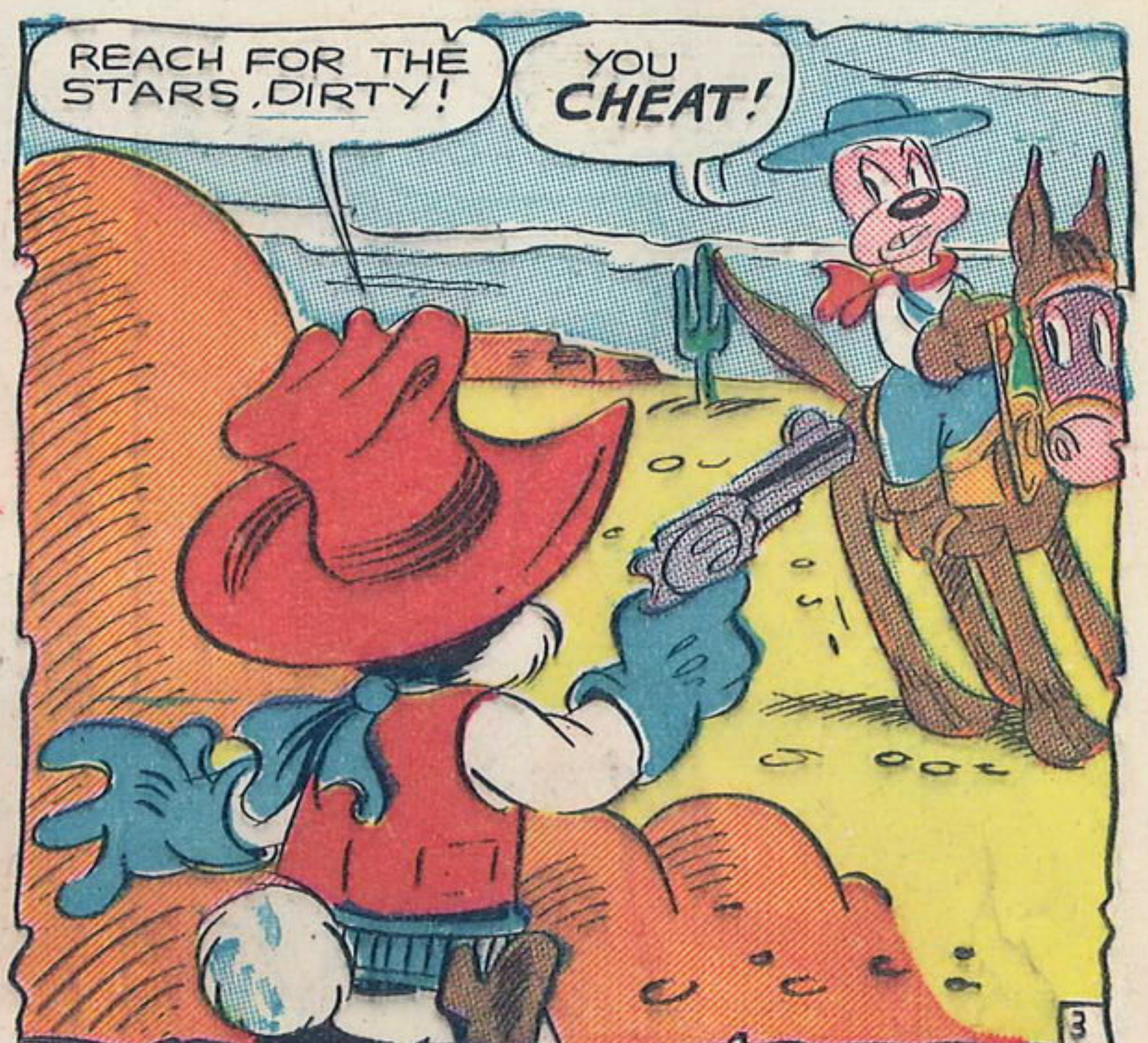
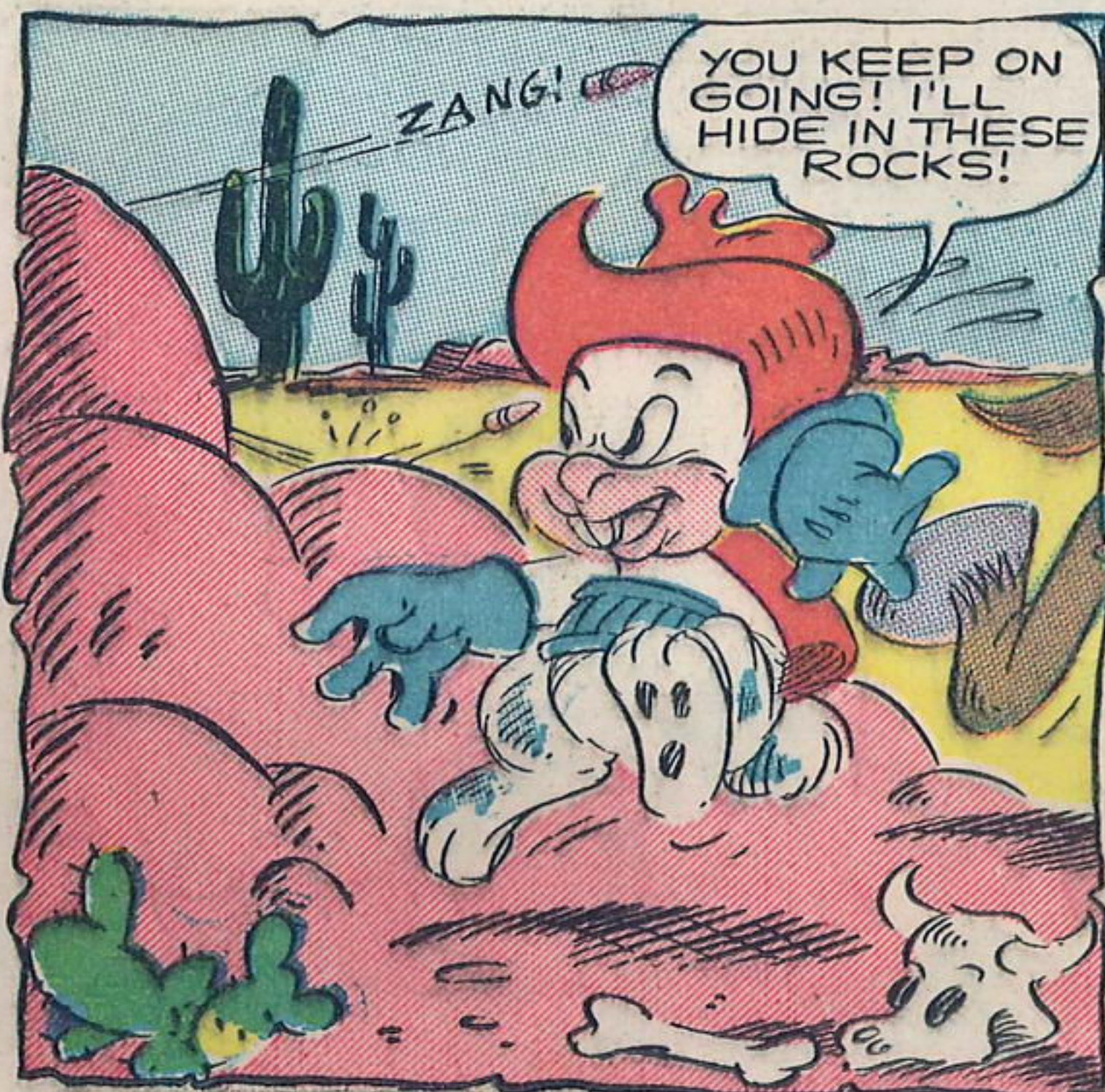
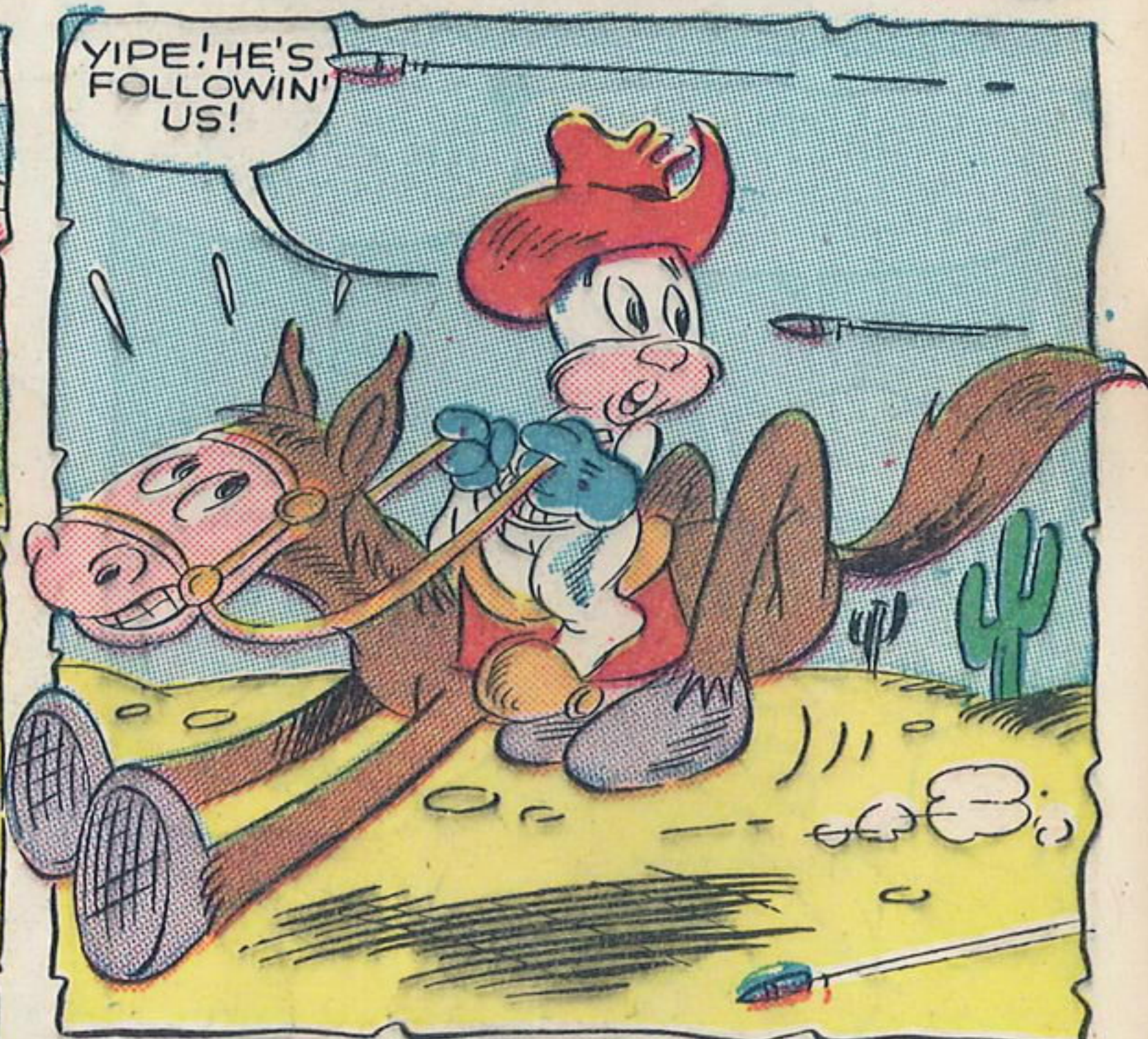
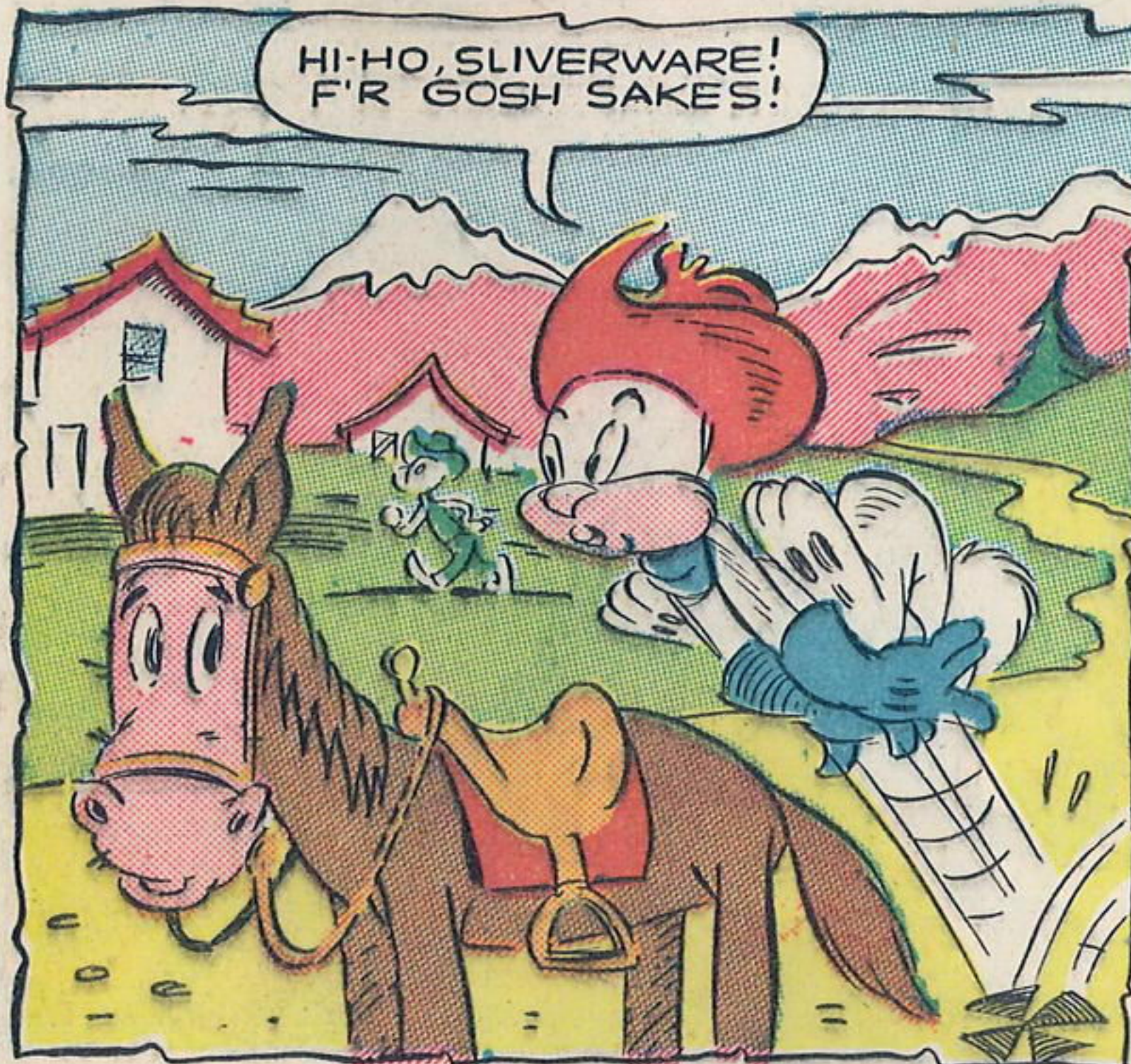
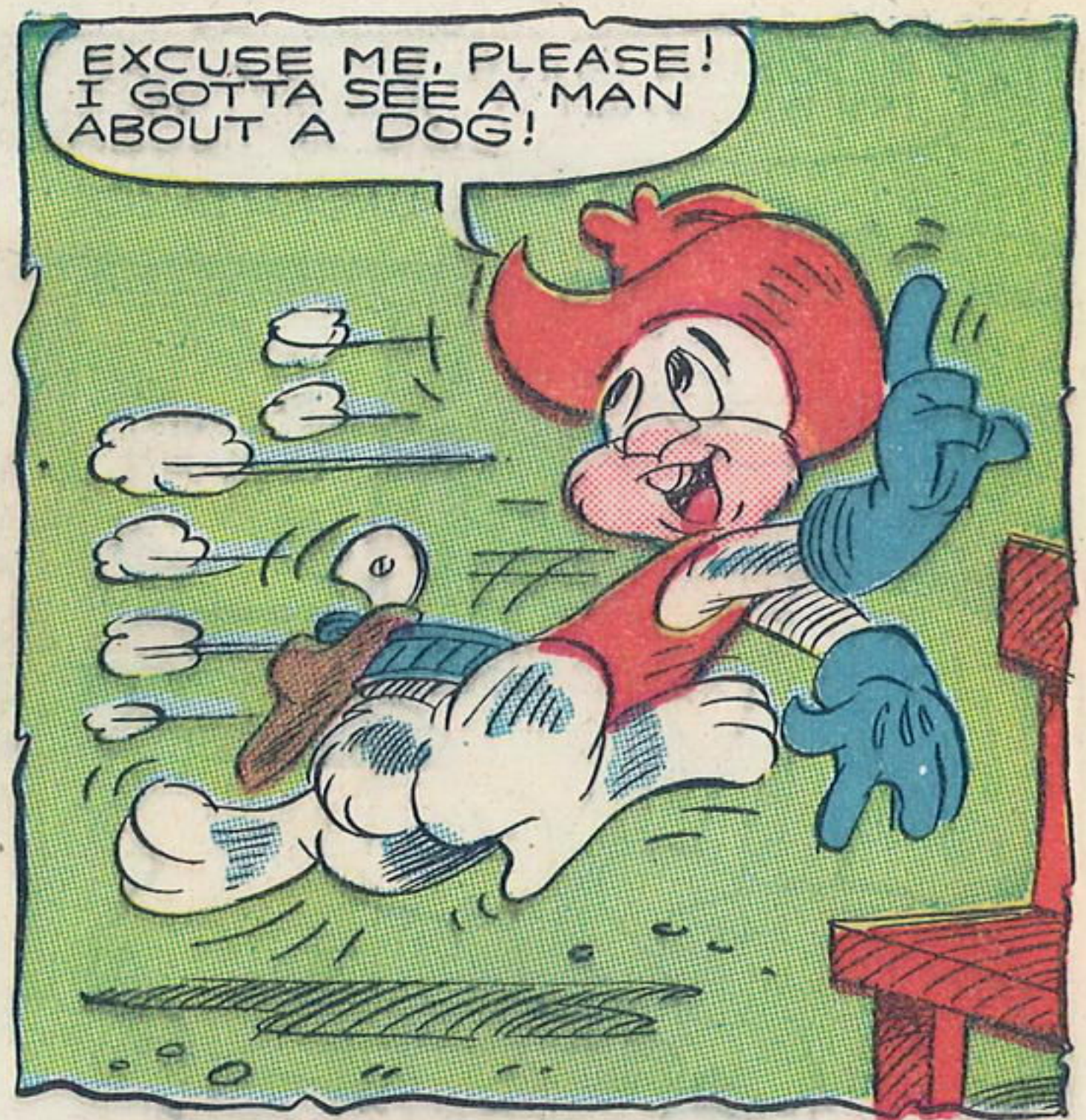
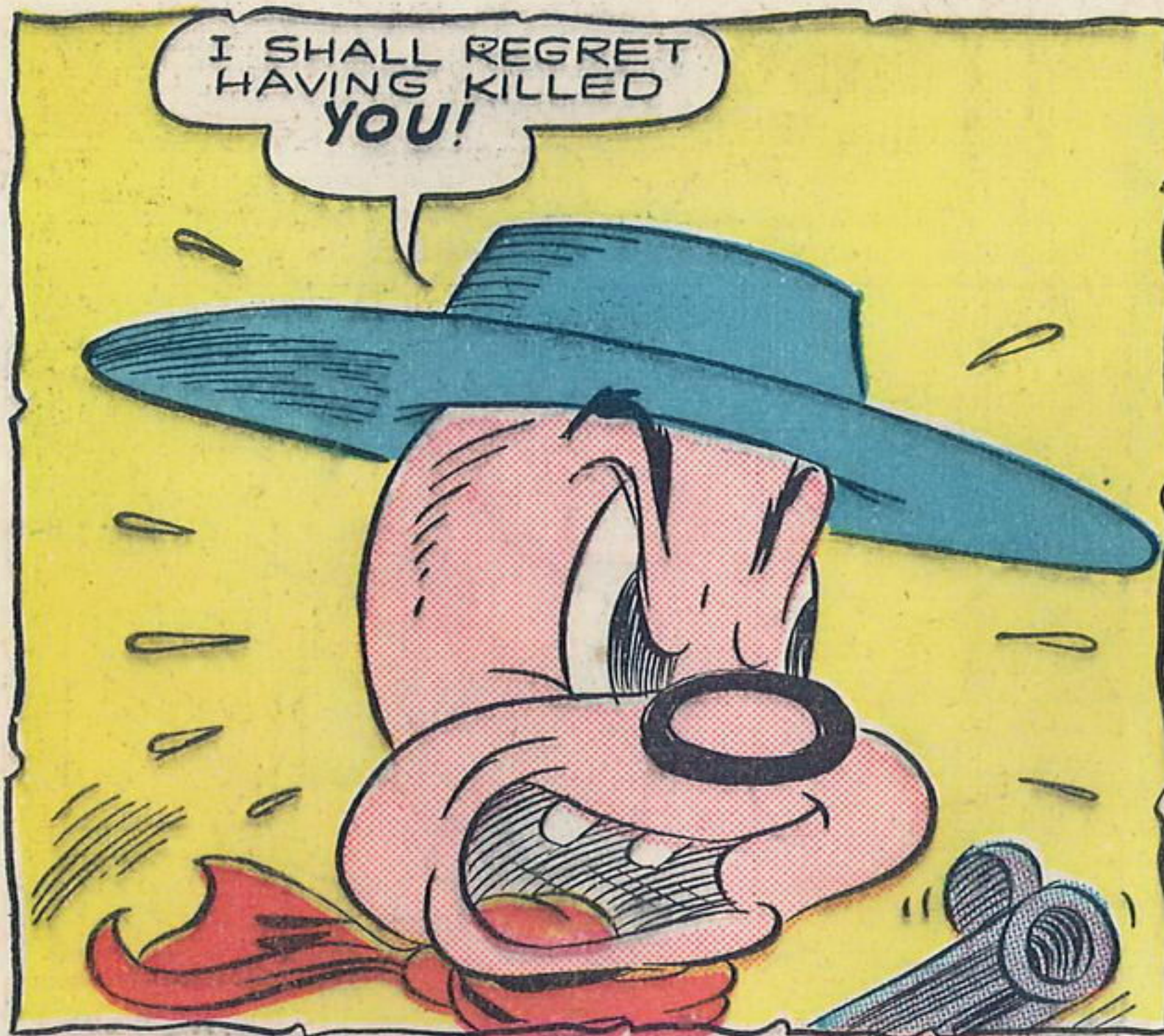
YOU BET!
(GULP)

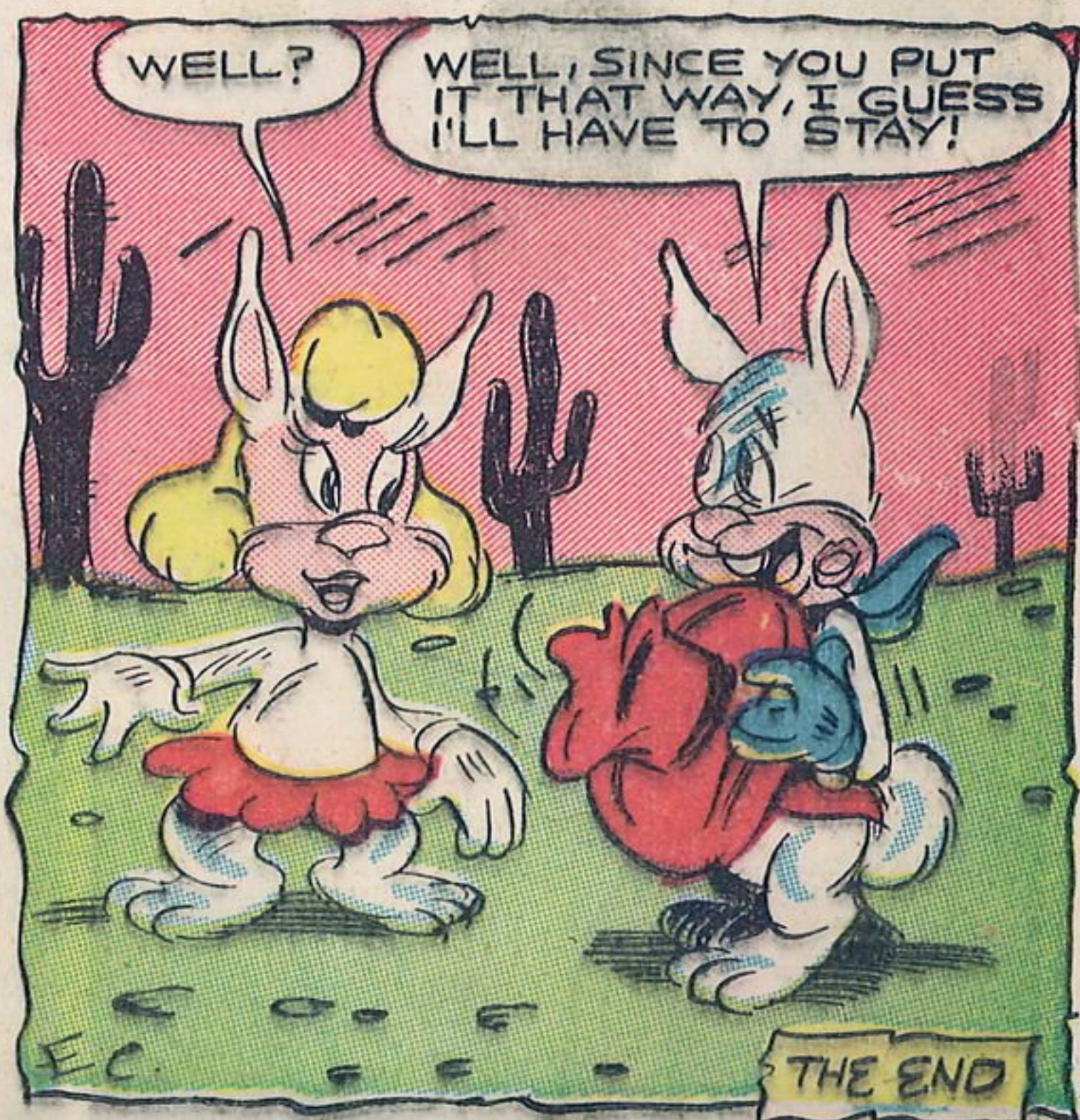
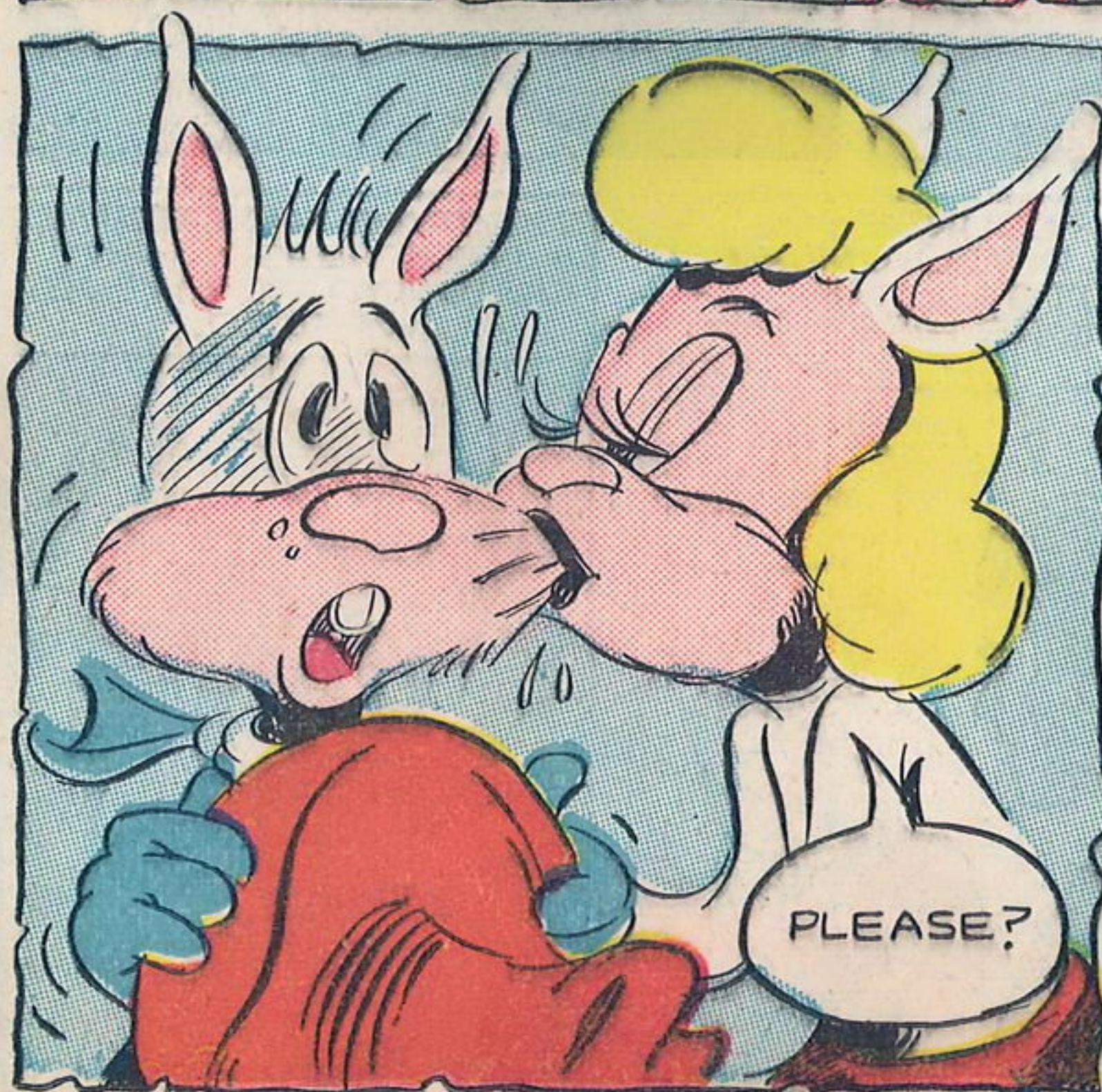
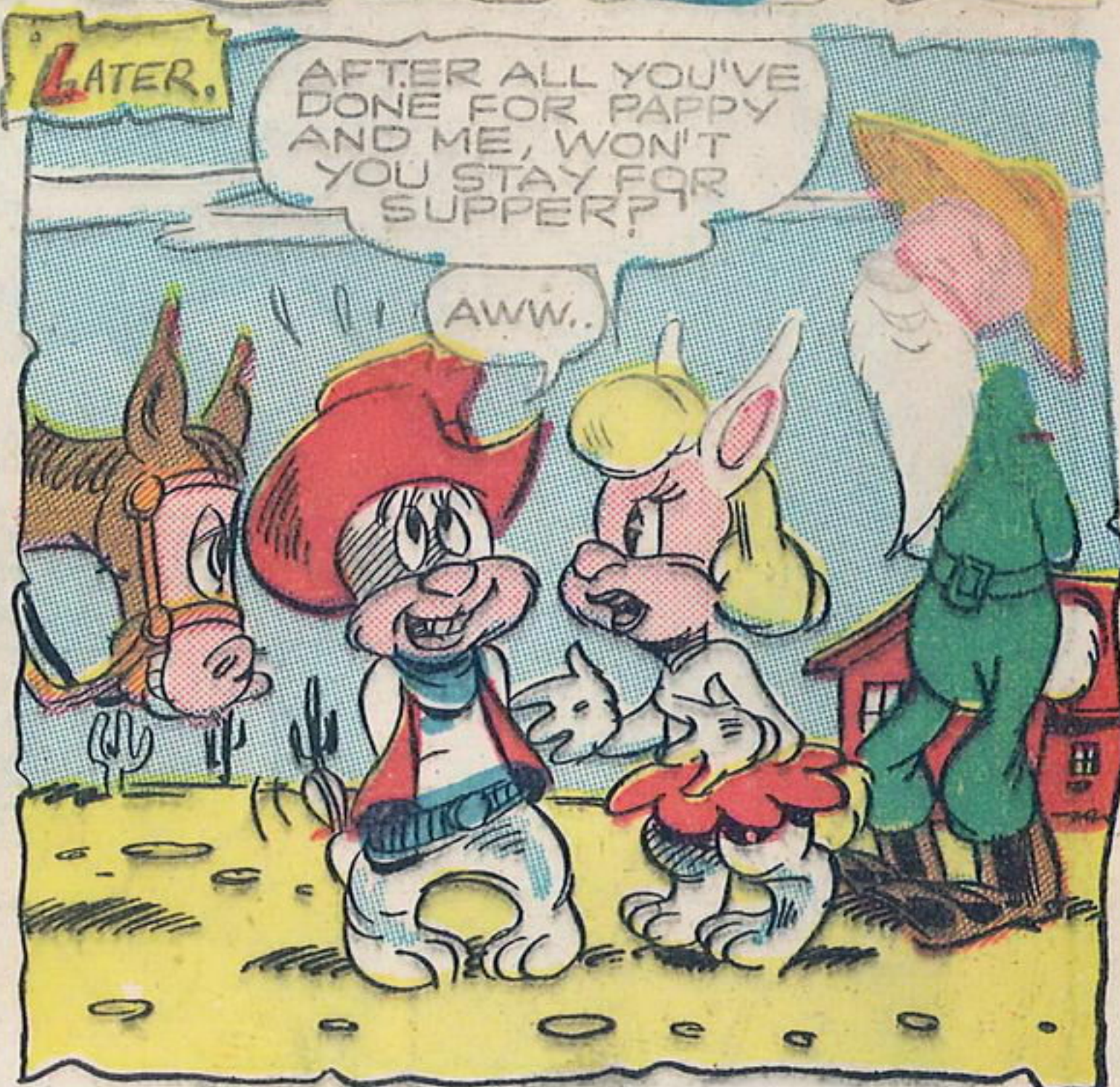
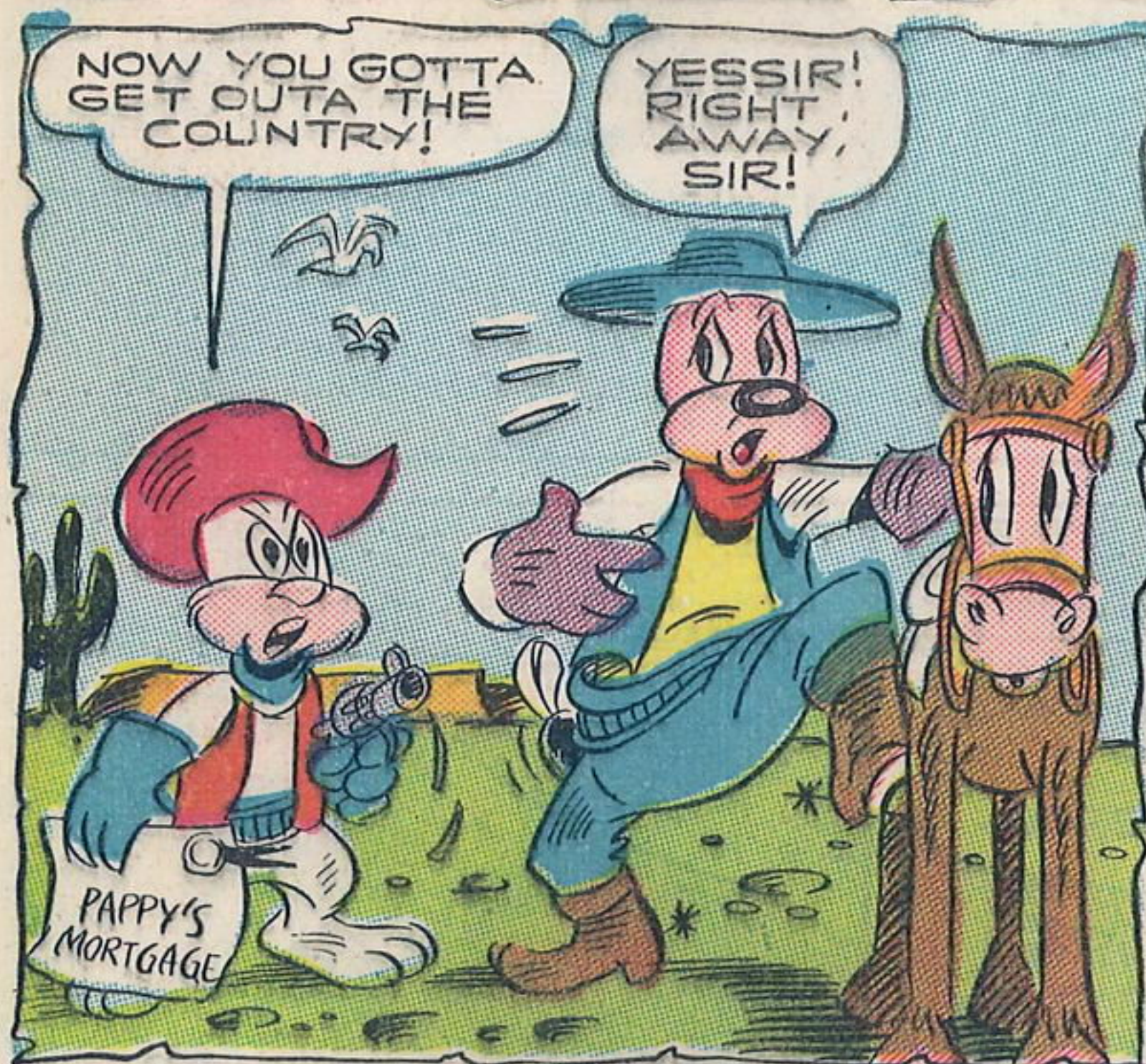
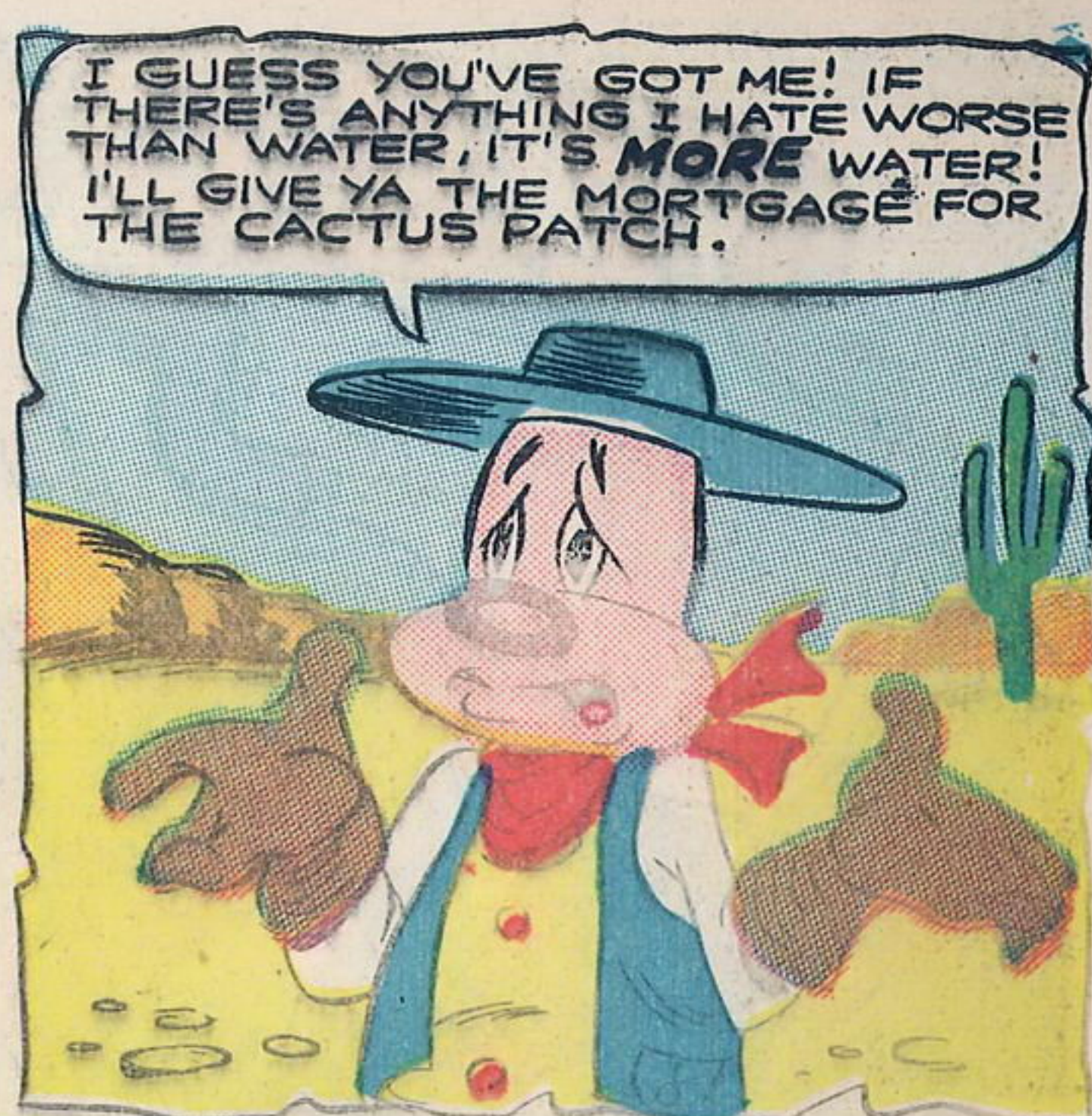
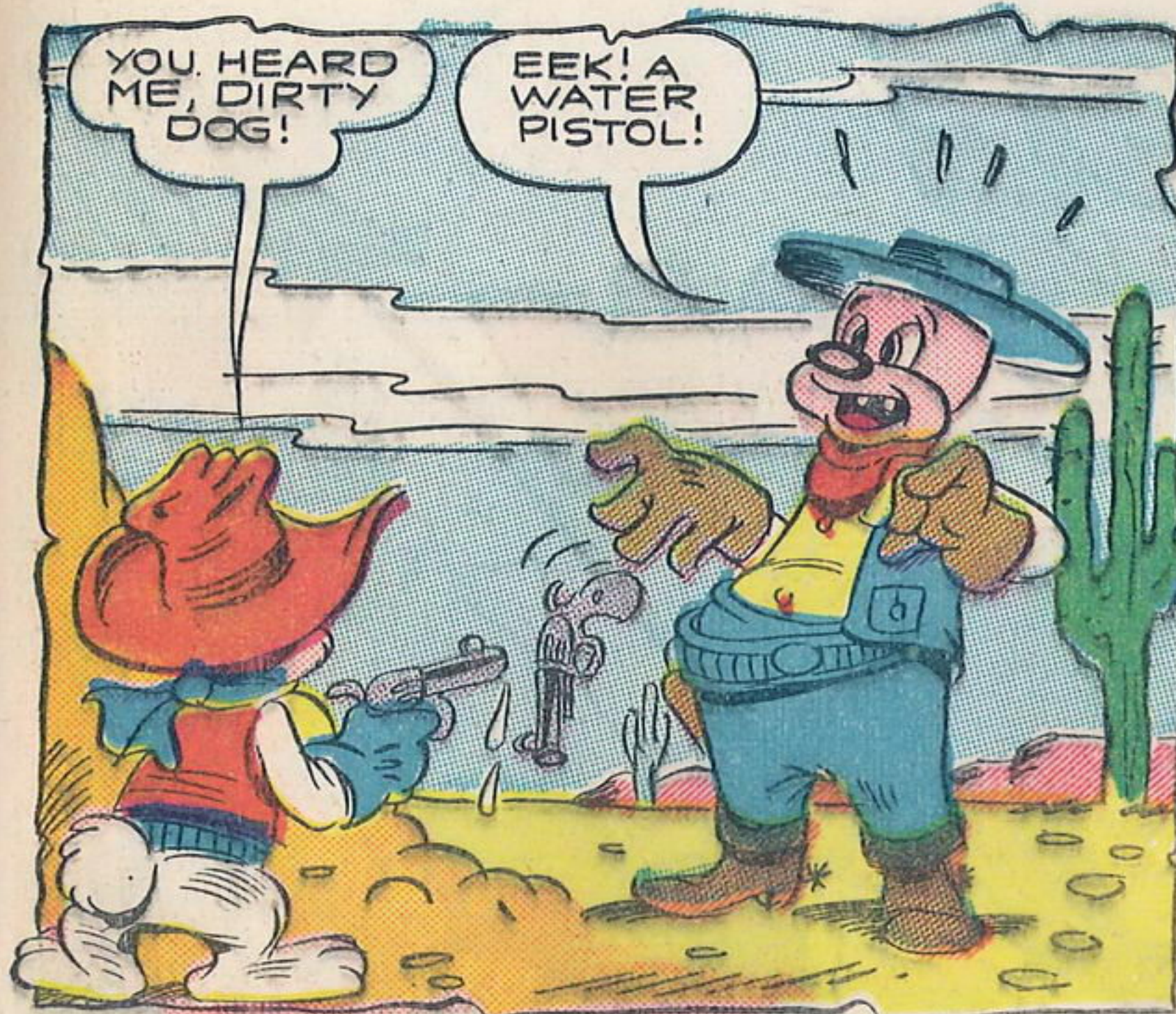


AND WHO ARE YOU?
CITY TAILOR, NO DOUBT?

OH, SURE!







SLEDGE STORM



IN THE FRIGID WATERS OF THE BERING SEA THREE MERCHANT SHIPS HAVE BEEN STRANGELY SUNK.. F.B.I. AGENT, SLEDGE STORM, IS COMMISSIONED TO SOLVE THE MYSTERY. . .

SLEDGE GETS THE NEWS BY RADIO FROM NOME. . .

HEAR THAT? THREE SHIPS SUNK..AND NOBODY CAN TELL ME THEY ALL HIT ICEBERGS!

I'LL HAVE TO INVESTIGATE, JACK. MAKE A REPORT TO WASHINGTON.. HUH? DID SOMEBODY KNOCK?

IT'S A SCARED ESKIMO LAD. . .

WHAT'S UP?

I, UMLAK, COME. CHIEF SICK. DOGS TOO.. THEY DIE! YOU COME SAVE THEM!

OF COURSE I'LL HELP YOU, UMLAK, BUT TELL ME MORE FIRST!

OUR CHIEF, HE GO HUNTING FOR SEAL.

THE TRIBE WAS PREPARING A GREAT FEAST.. MANY SEALS AND FISH WERE NEEDED. . .



THE BEST HUNTERS STALKED THE SEALS BUT THE CHIEF'S HARPOON FLEW MOST SWIFTLY.



THAT NIGHT THE CHIEF GAVE A BLUBBER FEAST. EVEN THE DOGS HAD THEIR SHARE..



BUT BEFORE LONG THE DINERS WERE WRITHING IN AGONY.



SLEDGE IS TAKEN TO THE CHIEF FIRST.

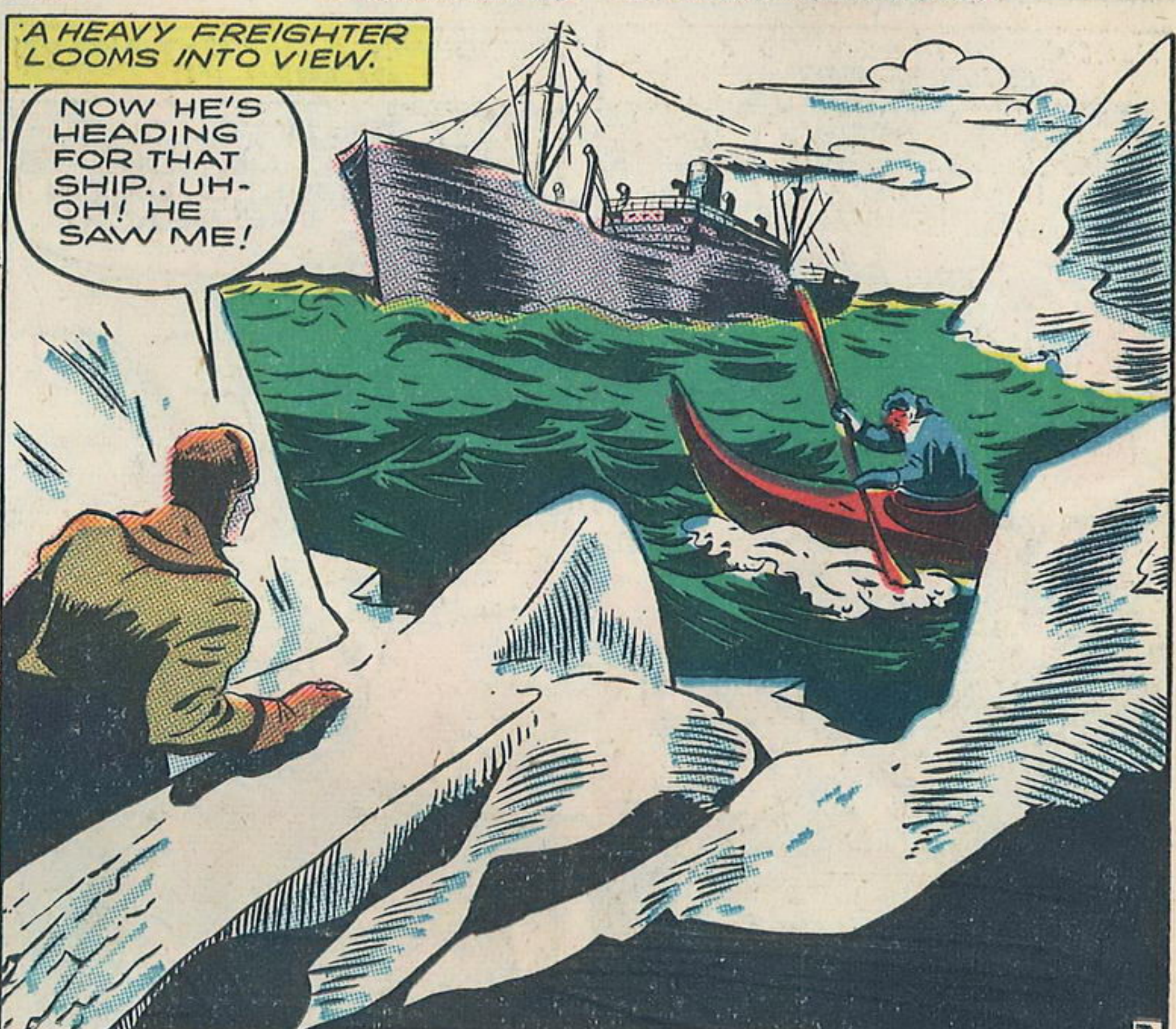


SUDDENLY A PANICKY NATIVE DASHES IN.



IN A SECOND SLEDGE RUNS TO THE SEAL STREWN BEACH.





WITH LIGHTNING STROKES,
THE ESKIMO PADDLES
TOWARD THE FREIGHTER. . .



IN HIS HASTE, THE NATIVE
COLLIDES WITH A JAGGED
FLOE EDGE AND IS FORCED
TO ABANDON THE KAYAK. . .



TRAITOR! FORCE YOUR
PEOPLE INTO STARVATION,
EH? I'VE A GOOD MIND
TO FEED YOU TO
THE FISHES!



SLEDGE QUICKLY SWITCHES
CLOTHES. THE ESKIMO IS
SPREAD-EAGLED HELP-
LESSLY ON THE ICE. . .



THE FREIGHTER'S OFFICERS
ASSUME SLEDGE IS THE
NATIVE. THEY GIVE HIM FREE
ACCESS TO THE ENTIRE
SHIP. . .



HE MANAGES TO GET INTO
THE CHART ROOM AND. . .



FURTHER EXPLORATION IN THE
HOLD REVEALS THE WHOLE
STORY. . .



QUICKLY IMPROVISING A TIMED FUSE, SLEDGE PLOTS HIS NEXT MOVE.

I'VE GOT ABOUT FOUR MINUTES! HAVE TO SINK THAT SUB, TOO!



NO ONE NOTICES THE SMALL KAYAK LEAVE THE FREIGHTER.

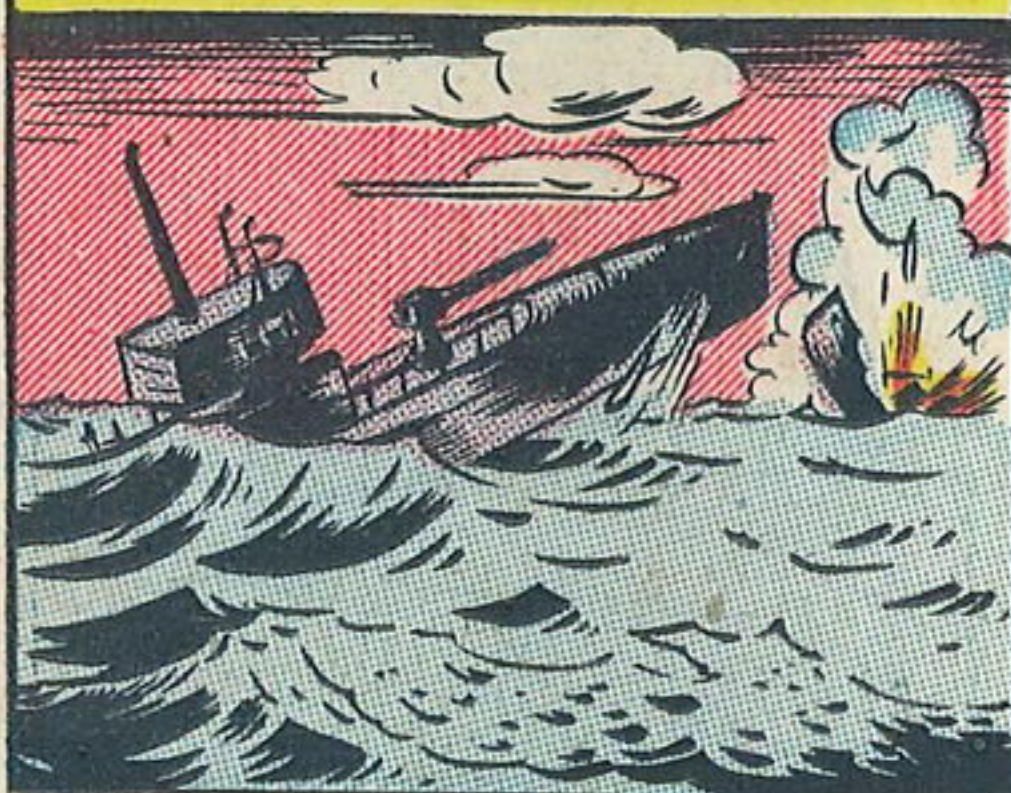
GOLLY, WISH THIS TUB HAD WINGS!



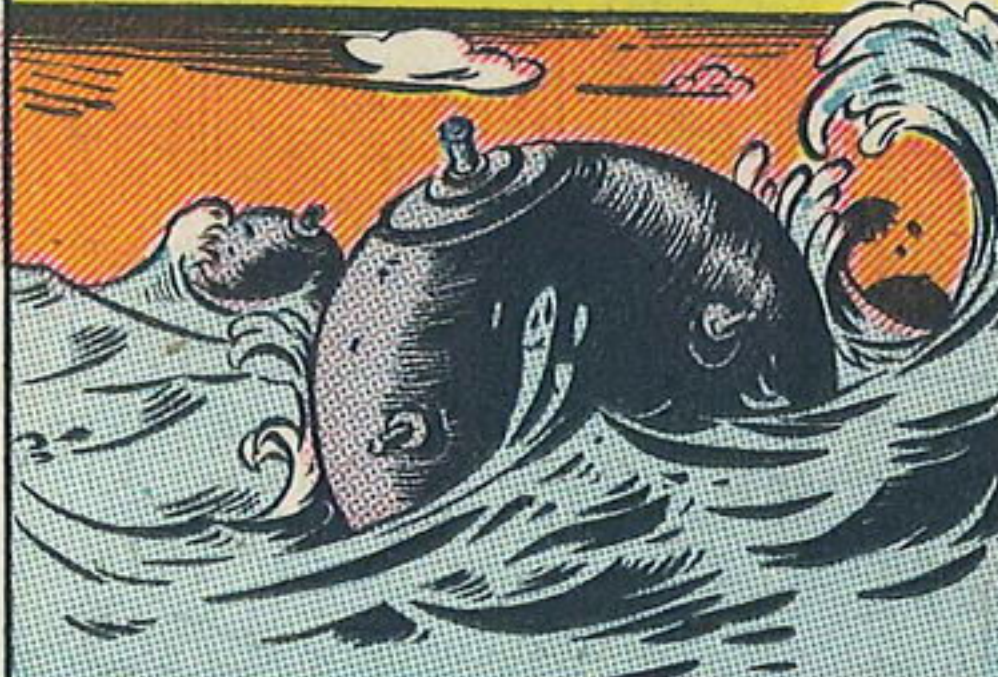
A SECOND LATER A TERRIFIC BLAST CLEAVES THE FREIGHTER IN TWO.



THE U-BOAT'S GRAY NOSE POKES UP TO INVESTIGATE.



BUT IT CANNOT APPROACH CLOSELY BECAUSE OF LOOSE MINES WHICH HAVE DRIFTED OUT OF THE SINKING HOLD.



WITH A CRACKLING, CRUNCHING THUNDER, THE HELPLESS SUBMARINE IS GROUND BETWEEN THE GREAT BERGS.



GOOD! THE SUB'S BETWEEN TWO ICEBERGS! I'LL BLOW THEM BOTH UP.



THE FLOATING PIECES WILL PILE UP ON THE SHIP.



WELL! THAT'S THE END OF RAIDING IN THESE WATERS!



BLUBBER AGAIN...UGH! AND I'M STARVING!

THAT NIGHT THE NATIVES HOLD ANOTHER FEAST. THE GUEST OF HONOR IS SLEDGE STORM.

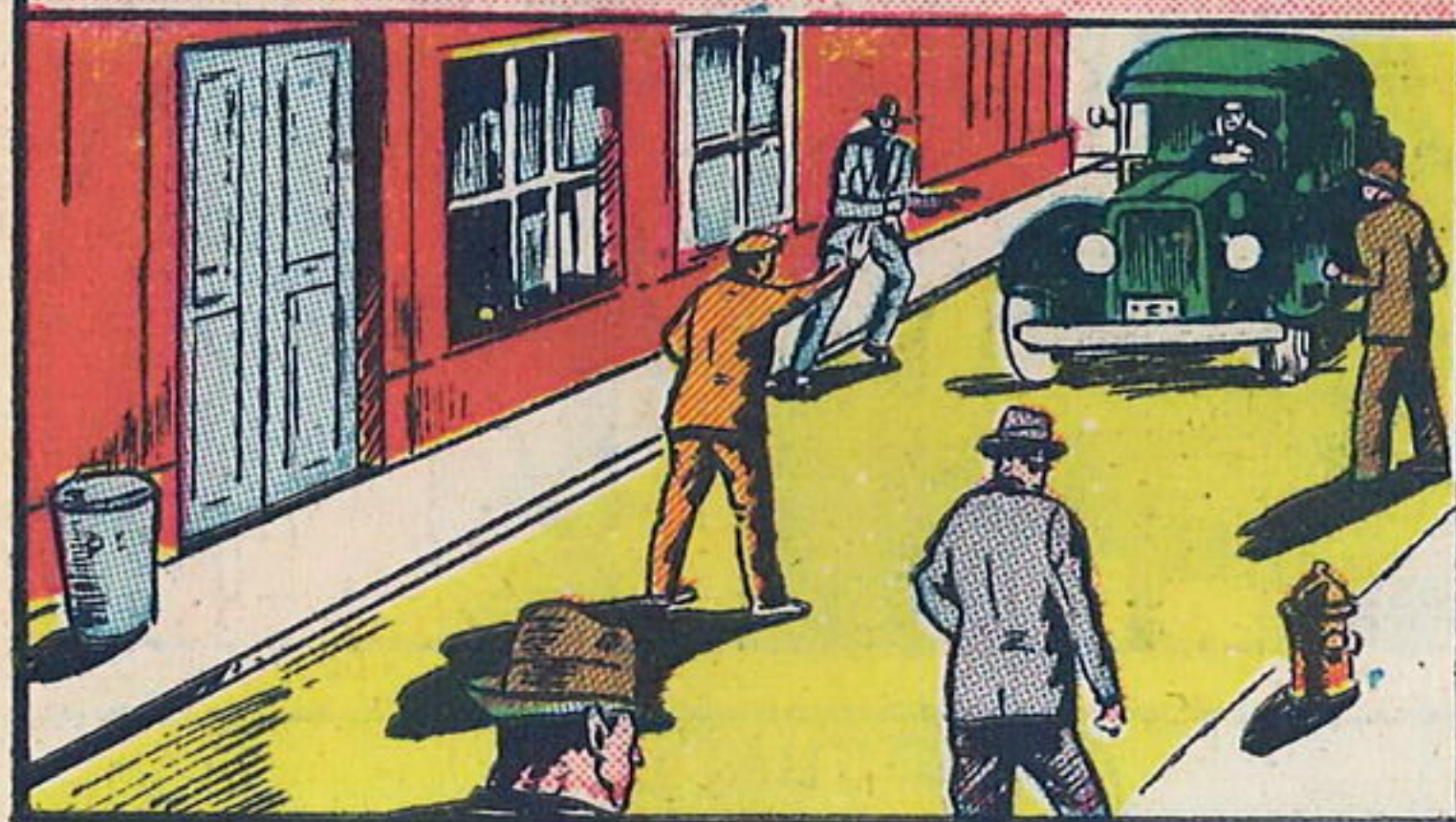
NO..THANKS! I..ER...ALREADY ATE!



BUY MORE WAR BONDS



IN THE EARLY HOURS OF THE DAY,
A GANG STOPS A TRUCK.....



THIS WILL CONVINCE YOU, BUDDY,
THAT YOU NEED OUR INSURANCE!



YOU BETTER SIGN THE POLICY, IF
YOU KNOW WHAT'S GOOD FOR YOU!



ALL RIGHT, I'LL SIGN IT.
JUST LEAVE MY TRUCKS
ALONE!

PAY YOUR DUES
ON TIME, AND
WE WON'T
BOTHER YOU!



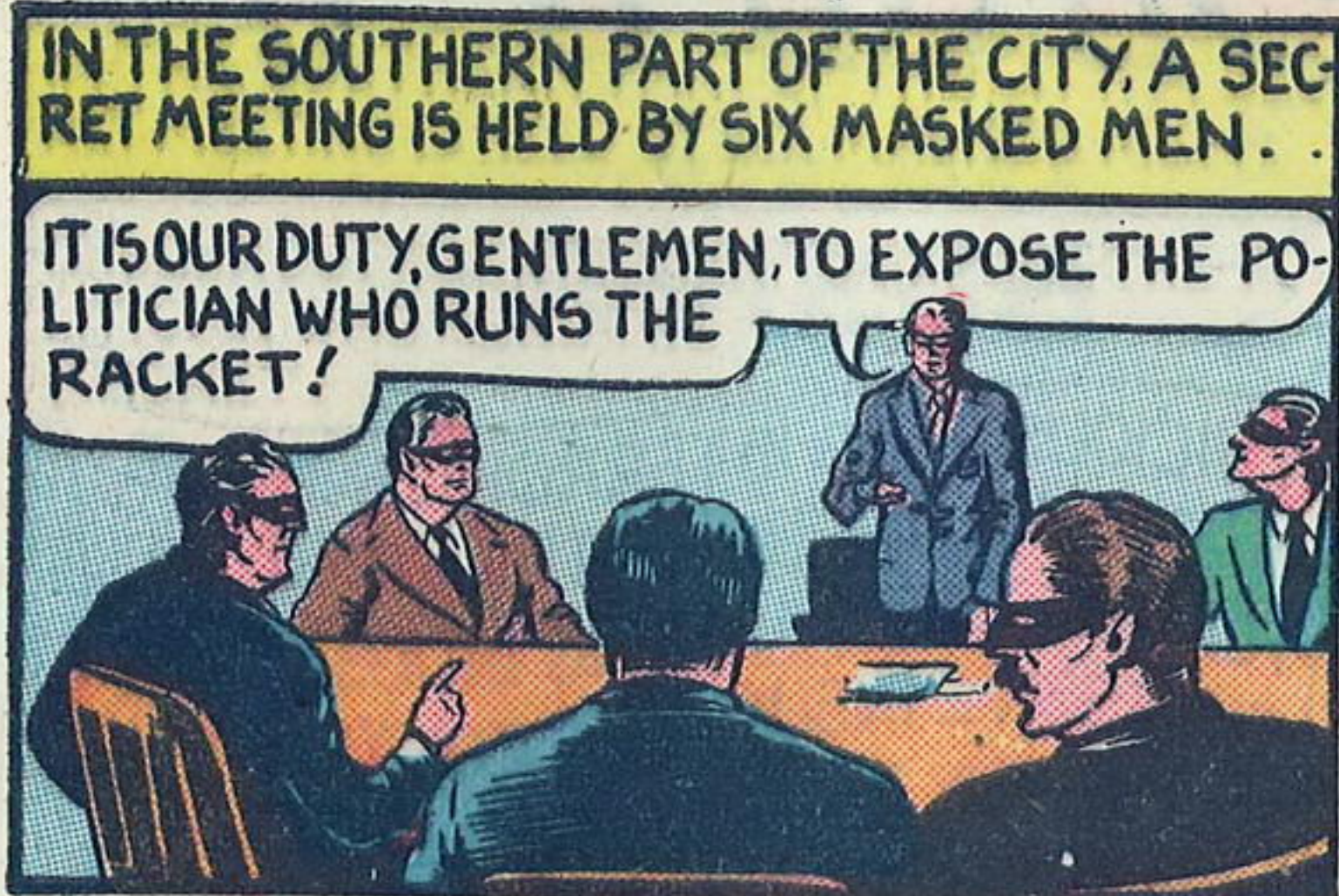


EXTRA! EXTRA!
INSURANCE GANG
INVADES CITY!
POLICE HELPLESS!



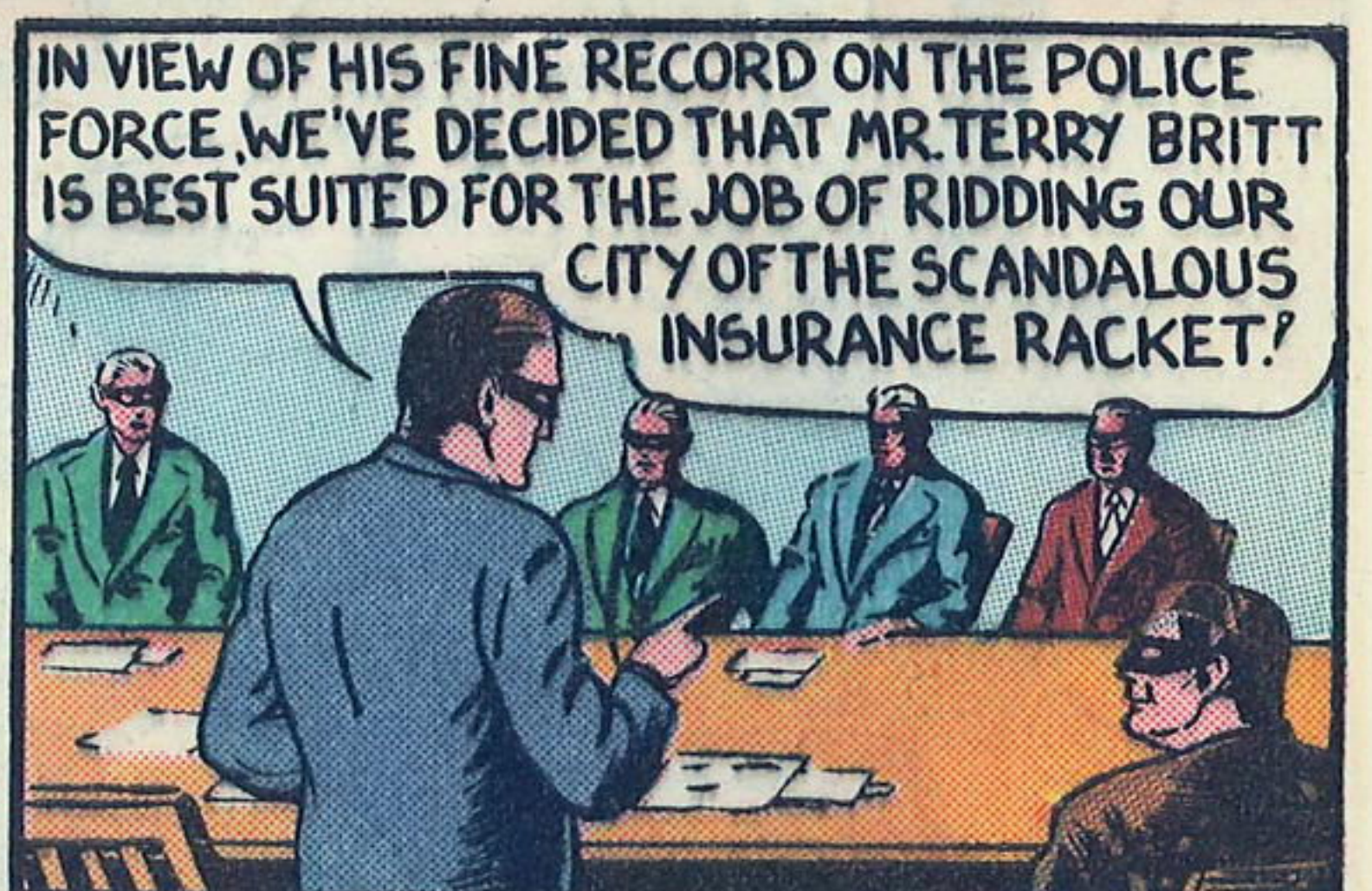
AT POLICE HEADQUARTERS.

ALL OUR EFFORTS ARE USELESS, CHIEF.
THE WITNESSES ARE AFRAID TO TALK!



IN THE SOUTHERN PART OF THE CITY, A SECRET MEETING IS HELD BY SIX MASKED MEN.

IT IS OUR DUTY, GENTLEMEN, TO EXPOSE THE POLITICIAN WHO RUNS THE RACKET!



IN VIEW OF HIS FINE RECORD ON THE POLICE FORCE, WE'VE DECIDED THAT MR. TERRY BRITT IS BEST SUITED FOR THE JOB OF RIDDING OUR CITY OF THE SCANDALOUS INSURANCE RACKET!



TWO HOURS LATER, TERRY BRITT APPEARS AT B.&G. TRUCKING COMPANY...

I EXPECT THE INSURANCE COLLECTORS TODAY..

I'LL WAIT FOR THEM.



AND AN HOUR LATER, THE CROOKS APPEAR.

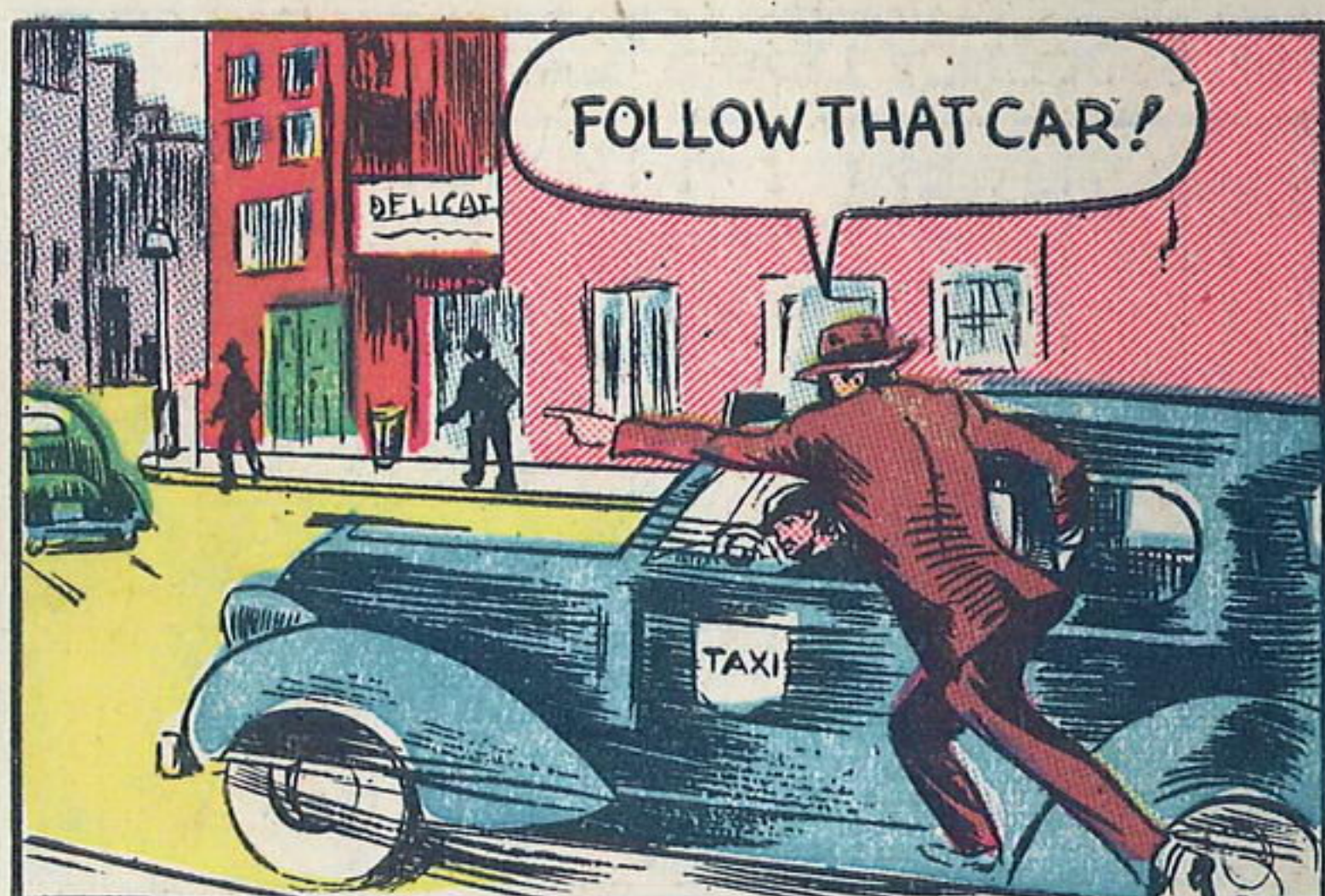
GET UP THAT PAYMENT, BLAKE, OR...

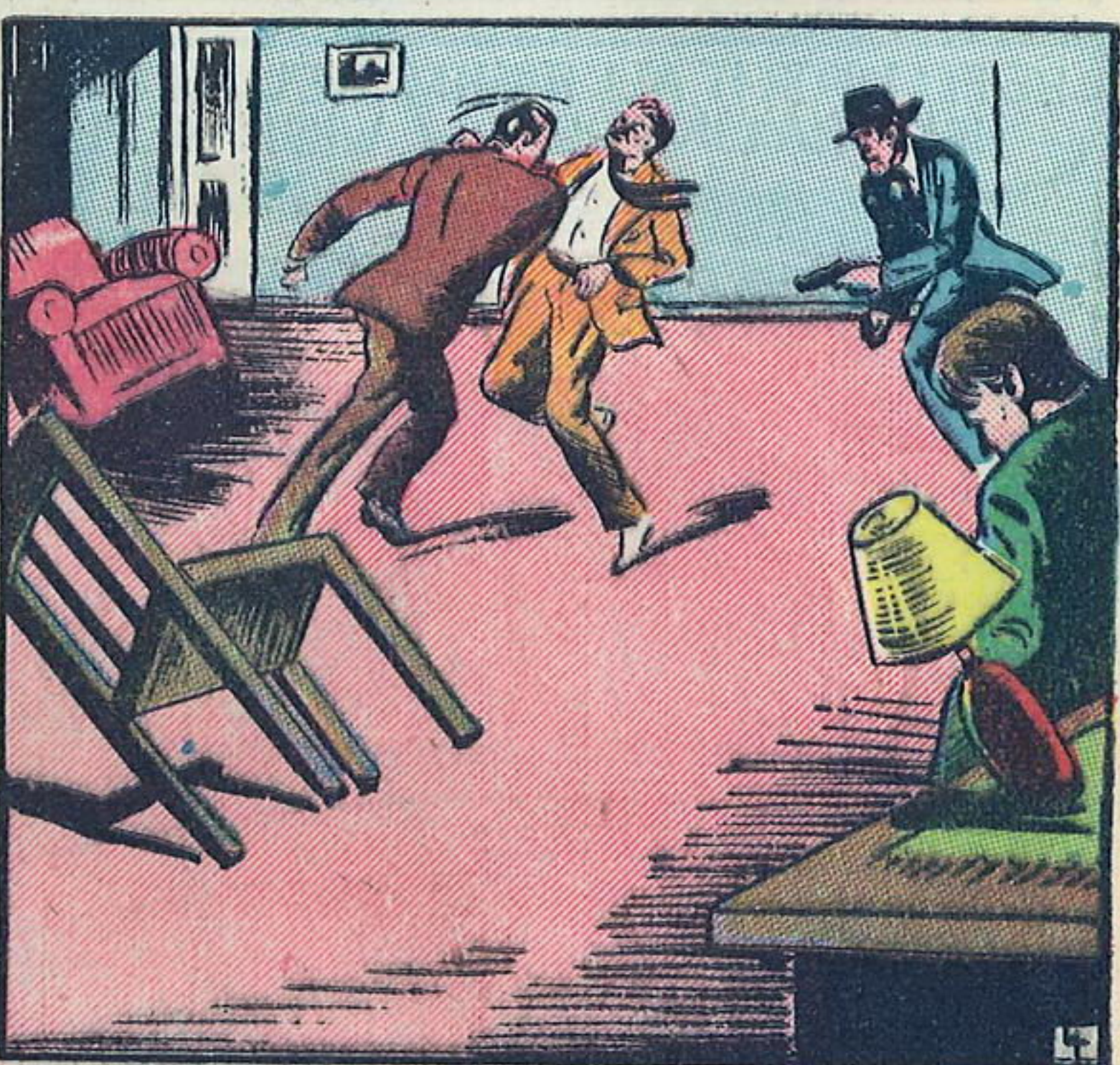


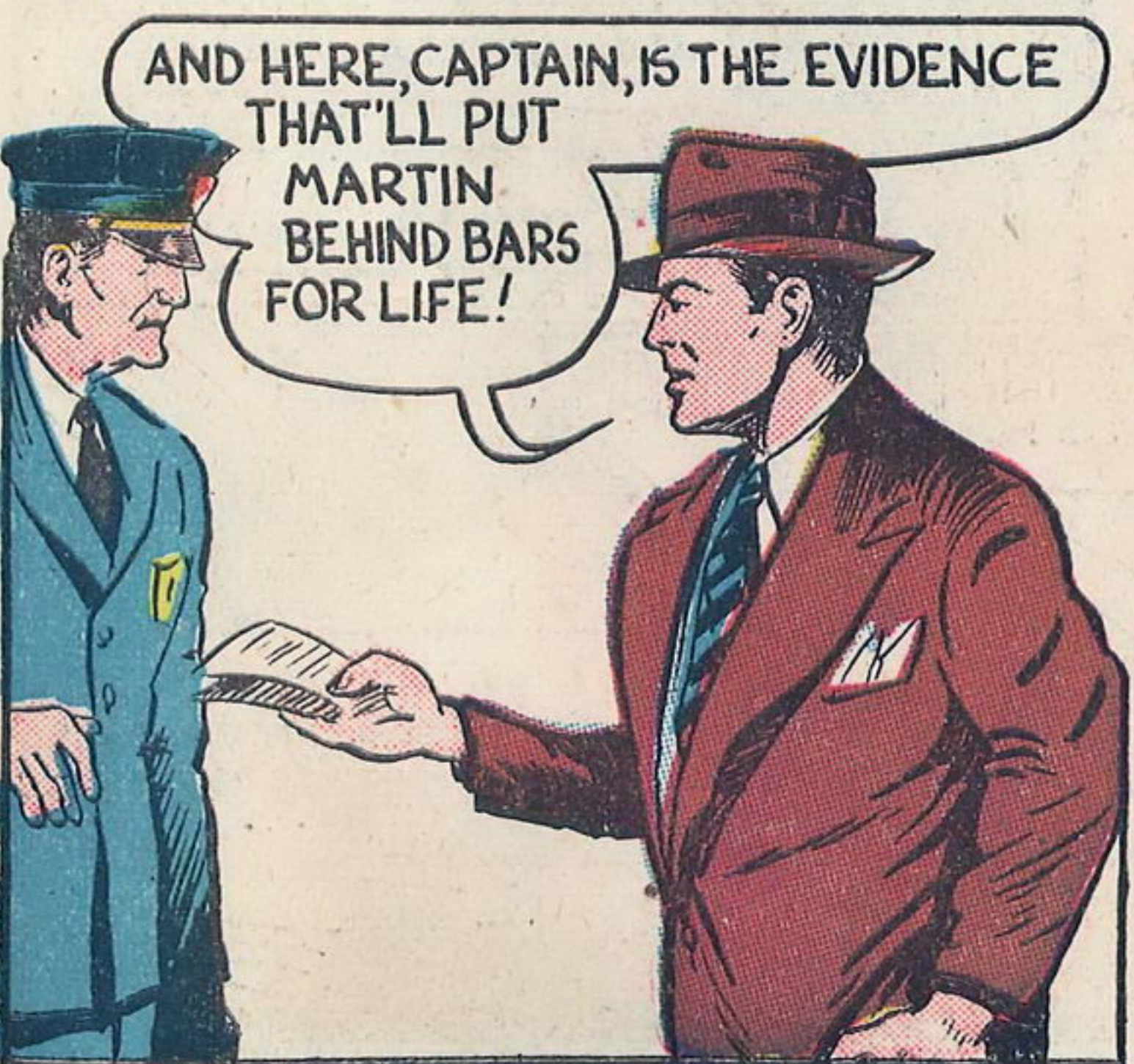
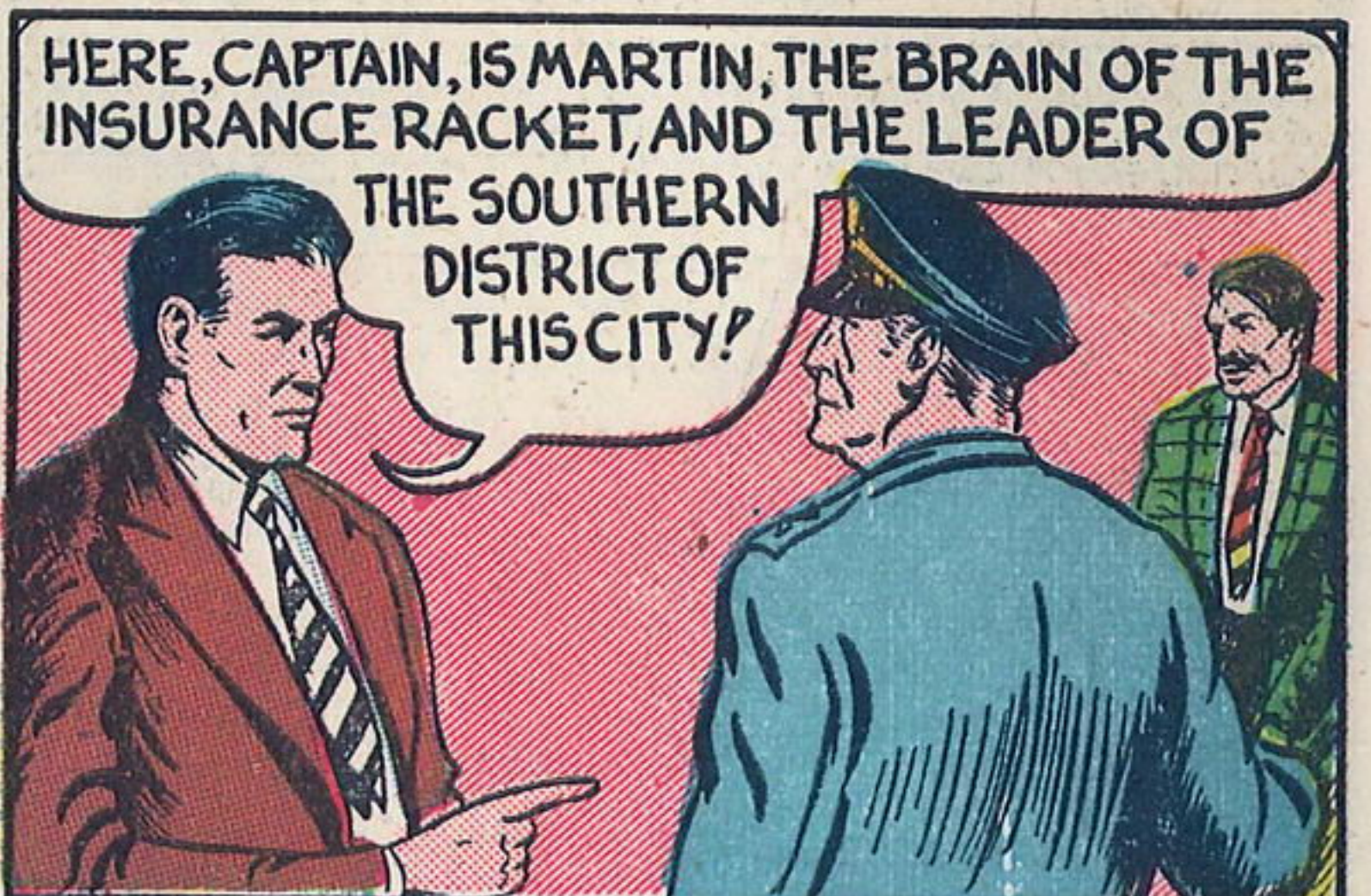
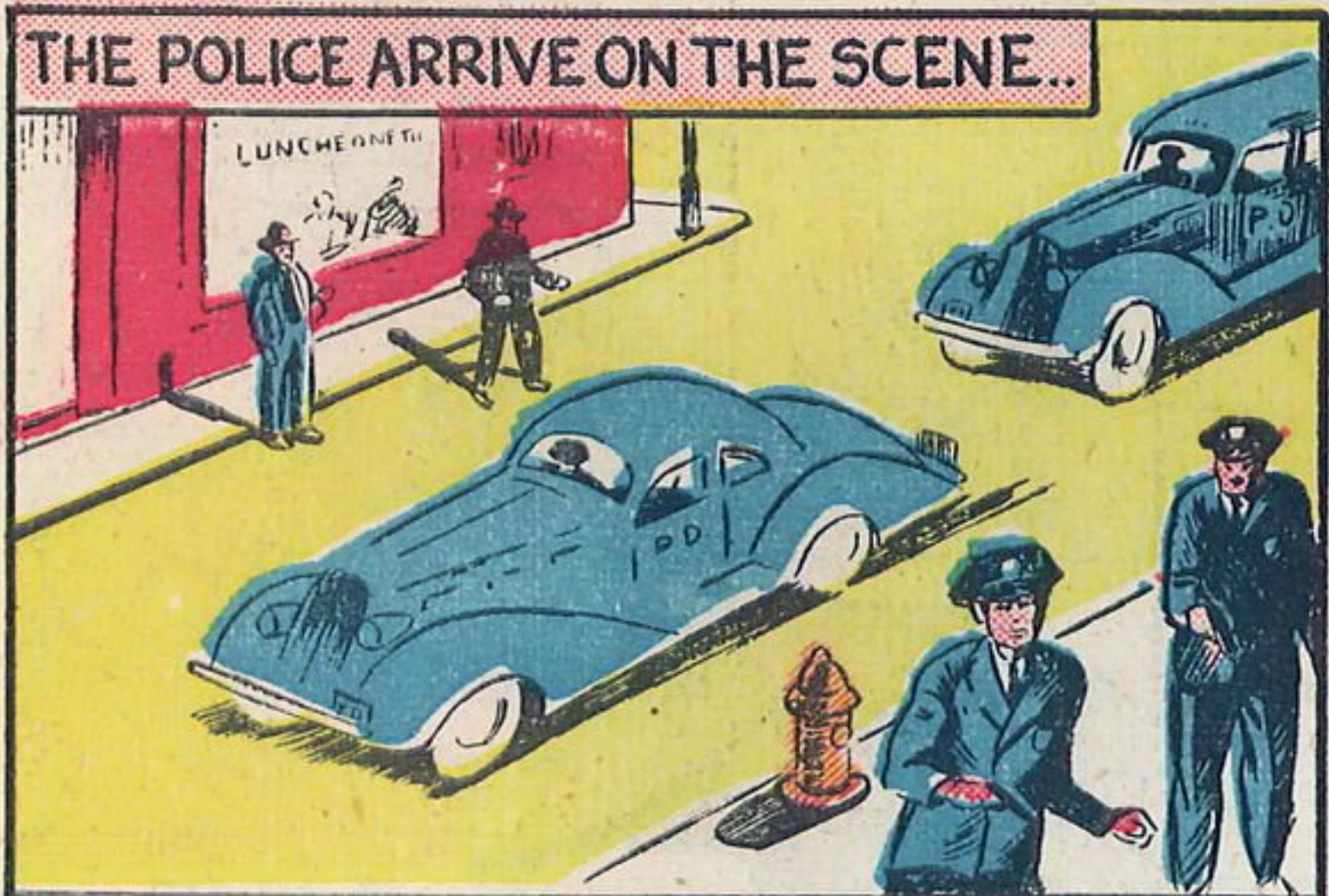
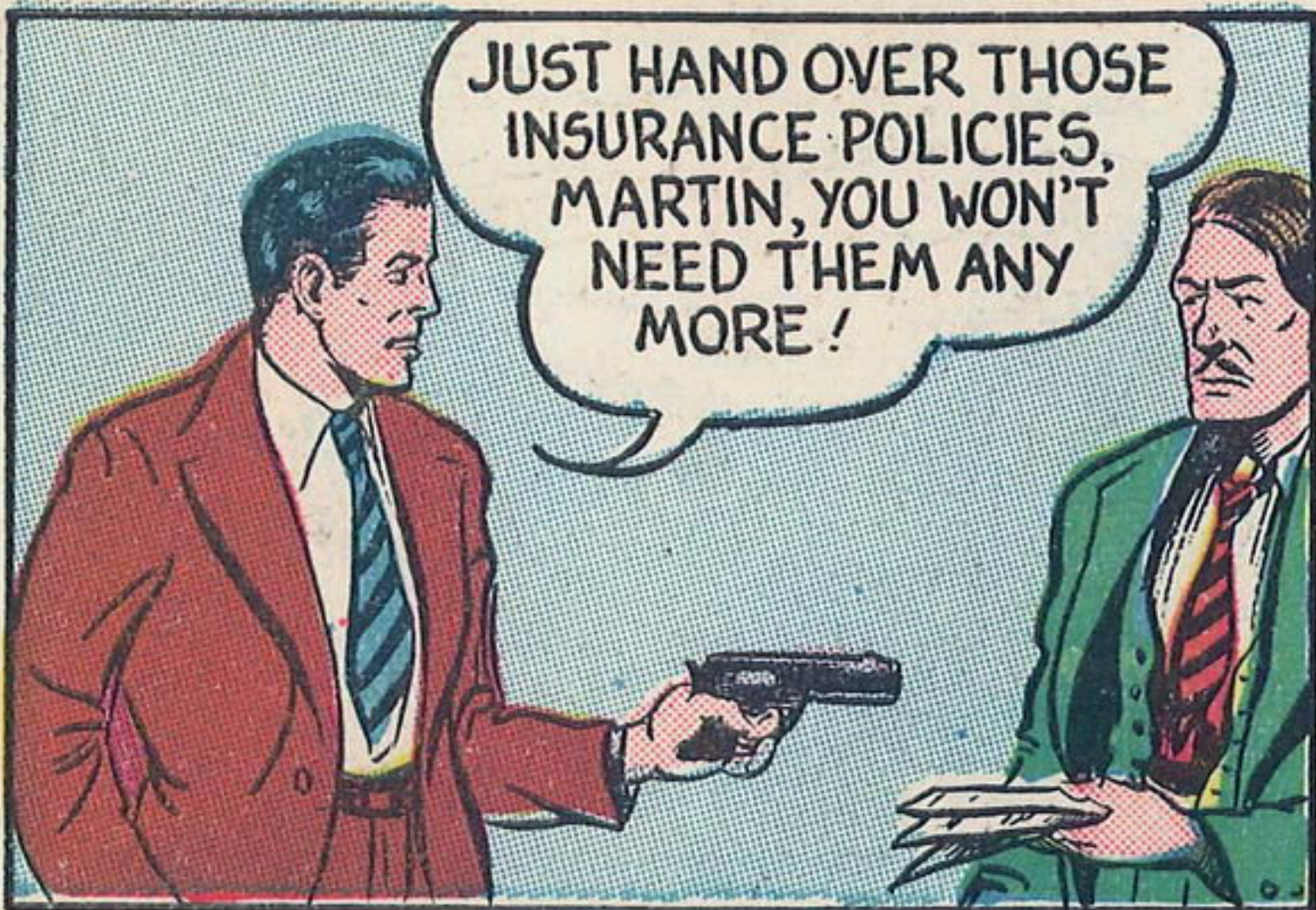
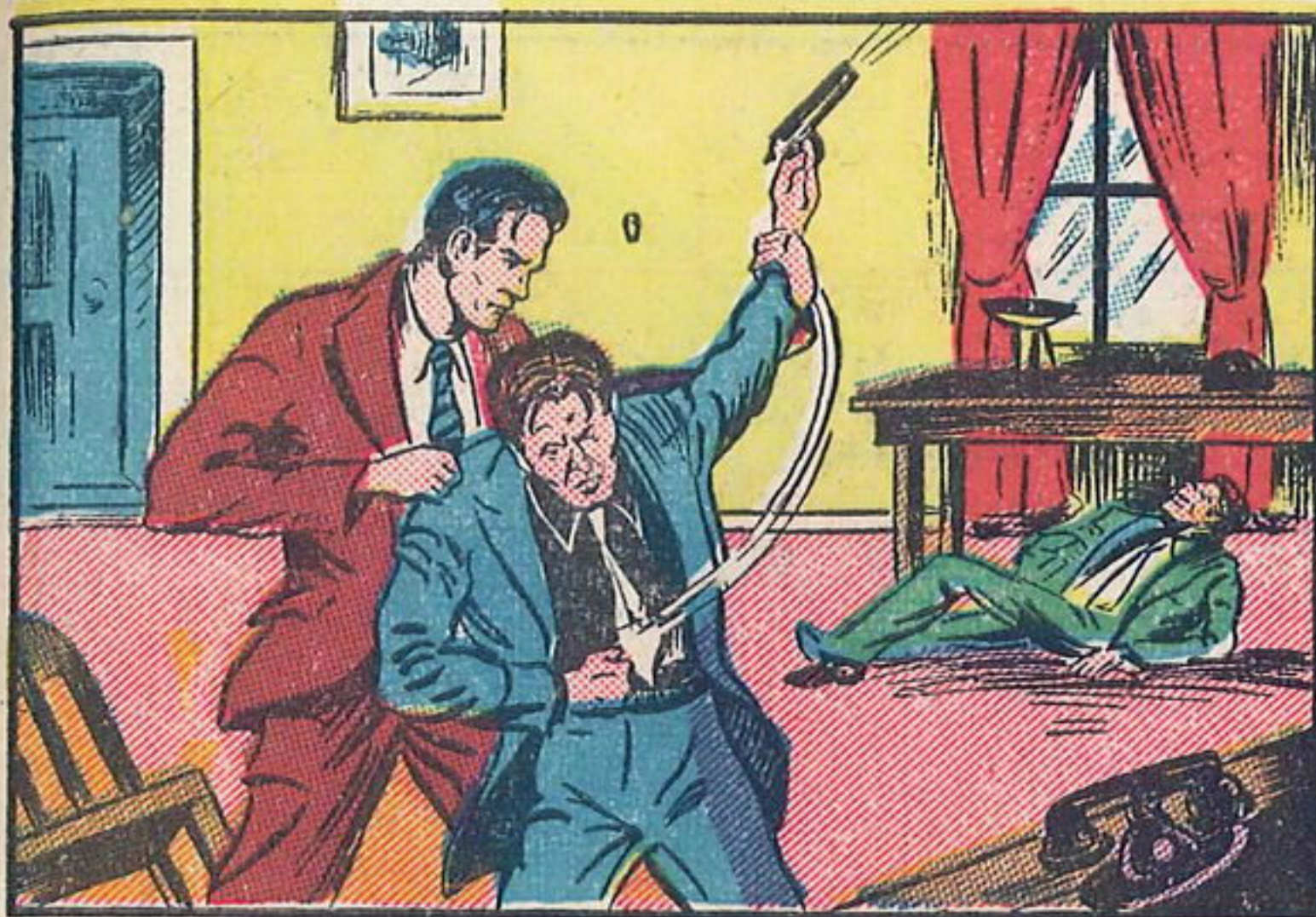
HERE'S THE LAST PAYMENT FOR YOU MUGS!



AND THAT'LL TAKE CARE OF YOU!



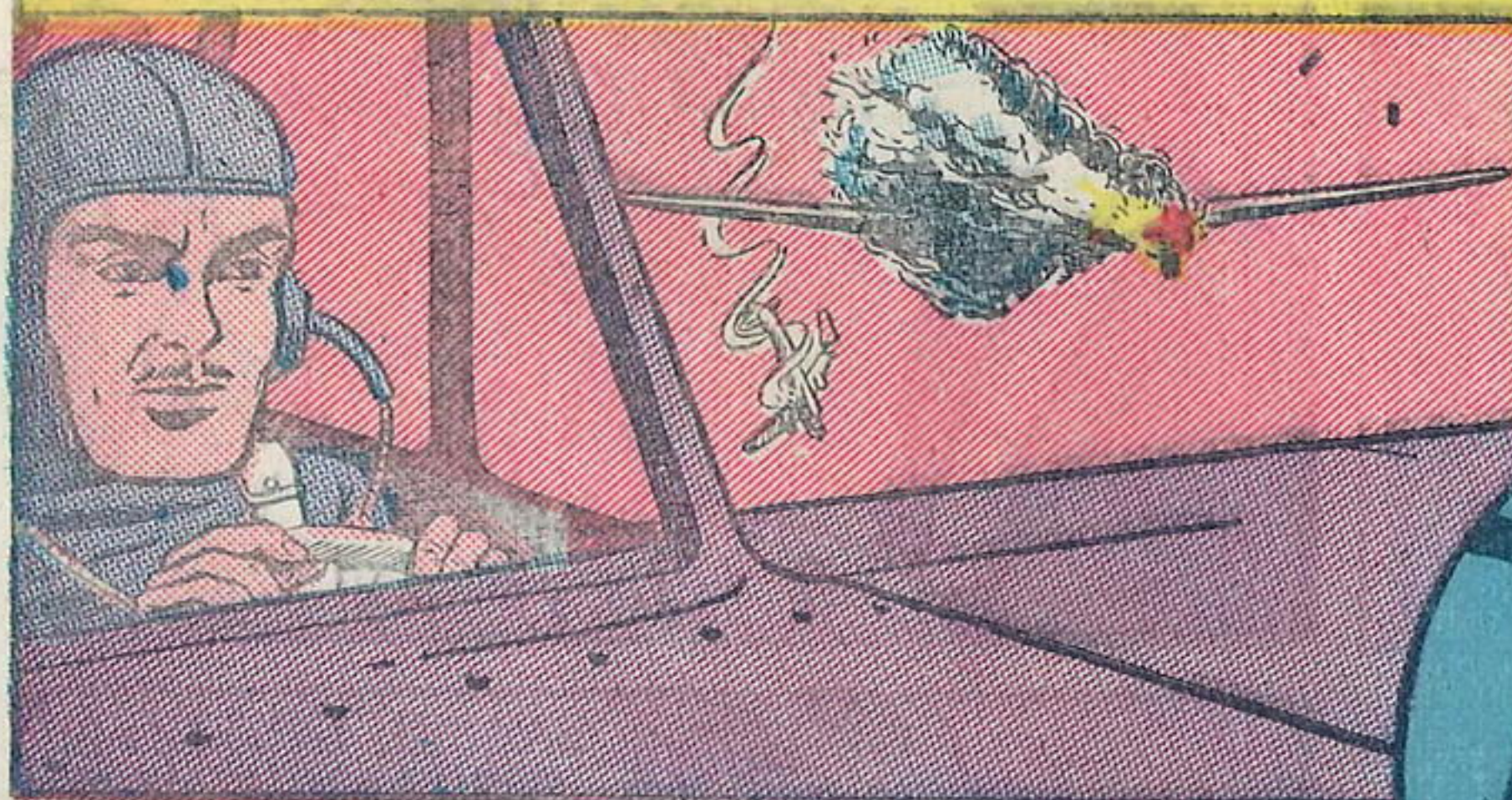




Captain BLAZE STEEL

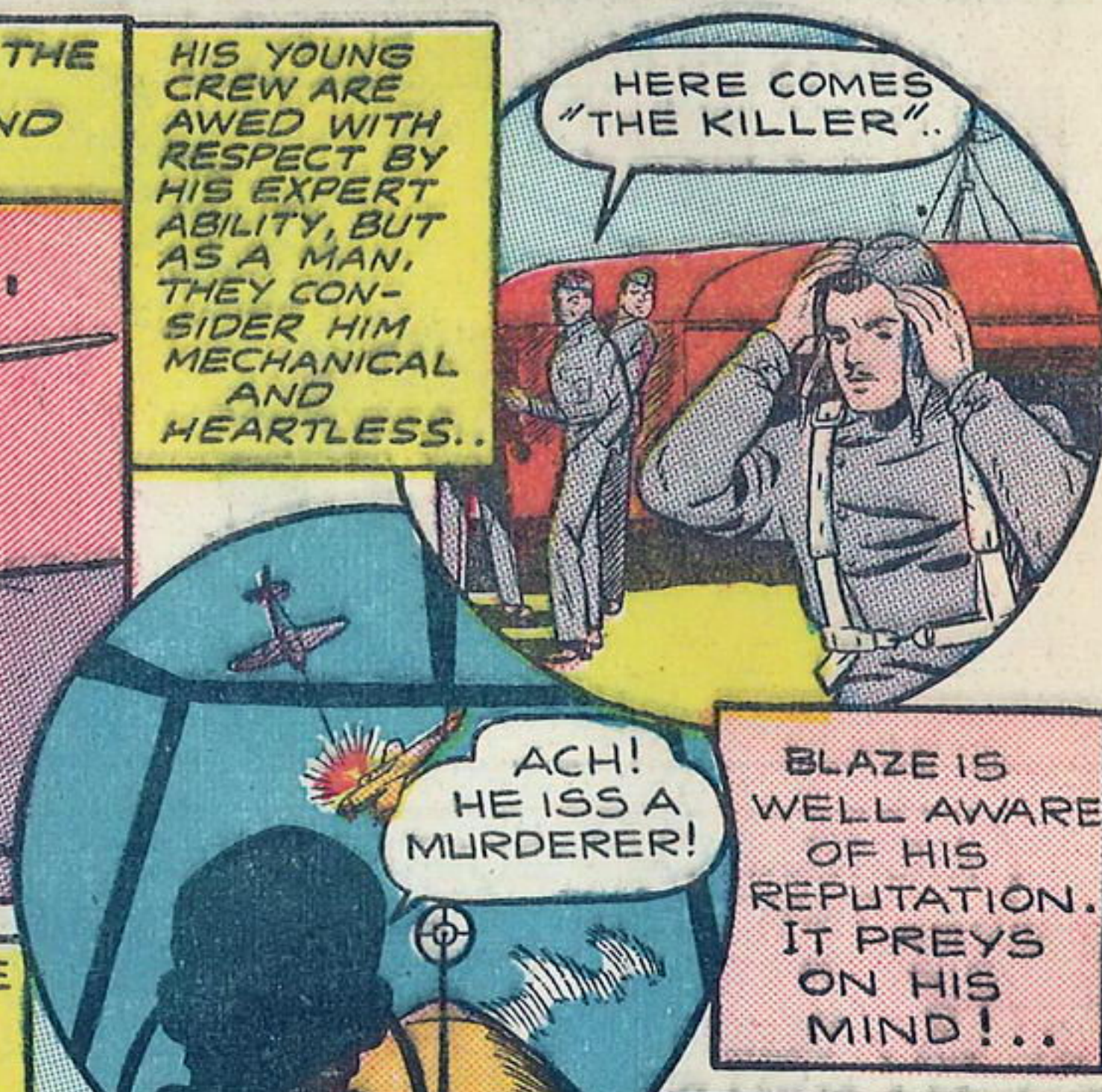
CAPTAIN BLAZE STEEL OF A.A.F. FAME HAS BEEN OFFICIALLY "LOANED" TO THE R.A.F. AS COMBAT INSTRUCTOR FOR GREEN FLIERS. . .

CAPTAIN STEEL'S REPUTATION IS NOT NEWS TO THE ENEMY.. SHIP UPON SHIP OF THEIRS HE HAS BROUGHT EARTHWARD IN TWISTED METAL AND FLAMES. . .



HIS YOUNG CREW ARE AWED WITH RESPECT BY HIS EXPERT ABILITY, BUT AS A MAN, THEY CONSIDER HIM MECHANICAL AND HEARTLESS..

HERE COMES "THE KILLER"!!



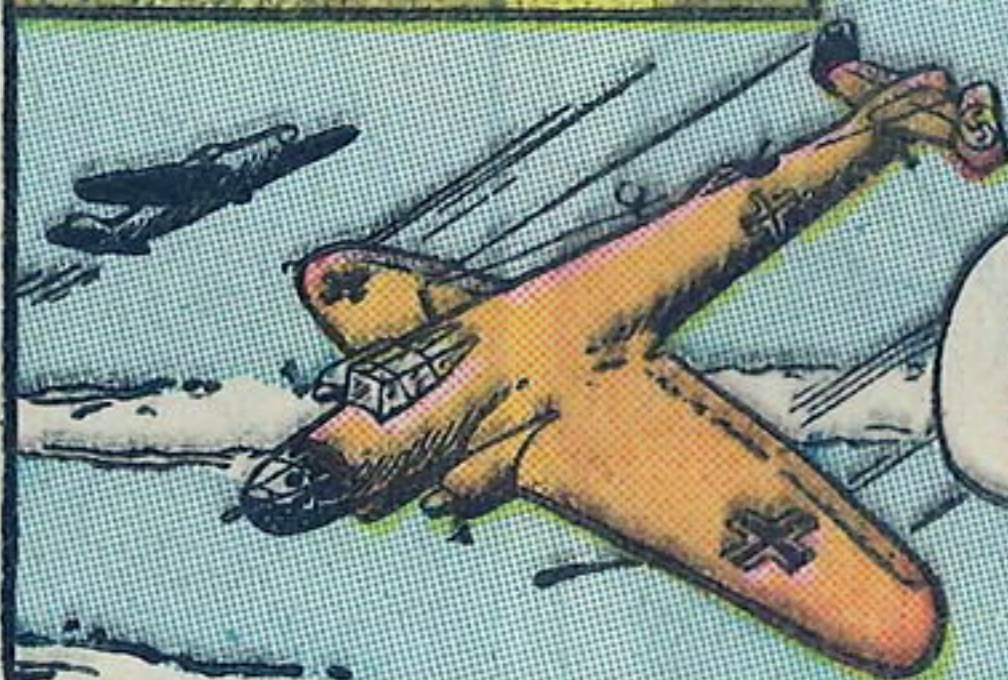
ACH! HE ISS A MURDERER!

BLAZE IS WELL AWARE OF HIS REPUTATION. IT PREYS ON HIS MIND!..

AMONG HIS COMMAND IS LIEUT. WHITEY FORBES WHO, ENVIOUS OF TIM'S SUPERIOR PROWESS, RESENTS HIM BITTERLY.

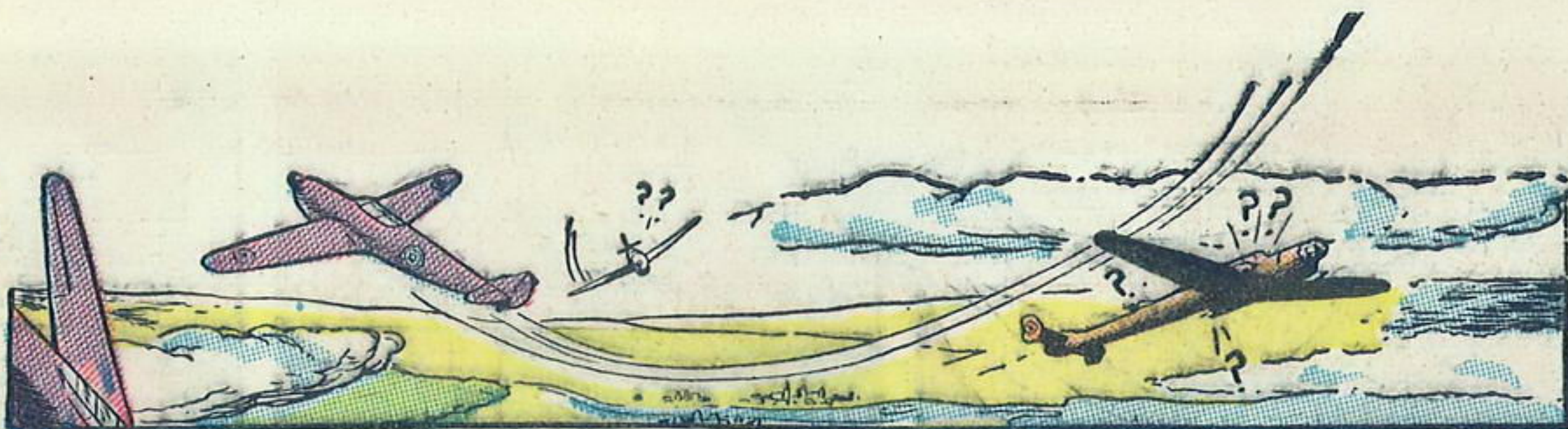


ONE DAY, WHILE REPELLING A SQUADRON OF JUNKERS BOMBERS, BLAZE HAS ONE SQUARELY IN HIS GUNSIGHTS!



WHAT'S THE USE.. I CAN'T DO IT.. ANOTHER KILLING ON MY RECORD DOESN'T HELP ME ANY. THE BOYS HATE ME AS IT IS. . .

THE AMERICAN
ACE DOES NOT
PRESS THE TRIPS
... AND LETS
THE BOMBER
ESCAPE!



HIS SQUADRON
IS STAGGERED..

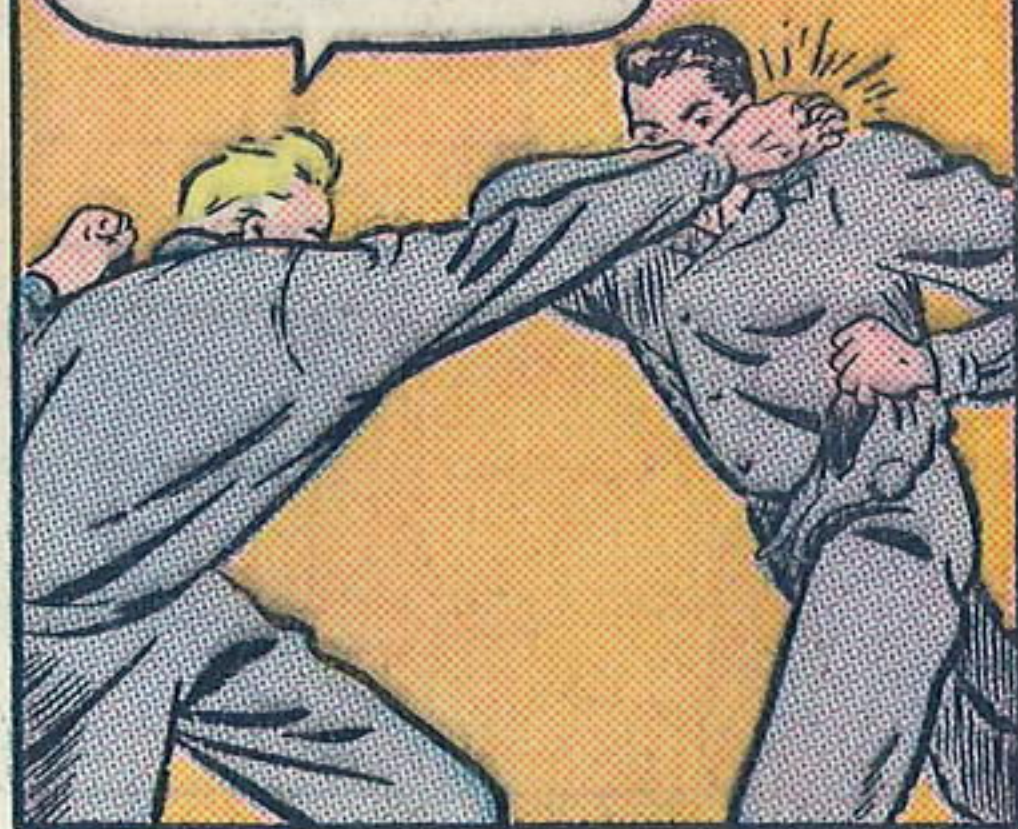
WHAT'S COME
OVER HIM?

I NEVER HEARD
OF A PILOT, AN ACE
AT THAT, LET A
GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY
LIKE THAT GO BY!

YOU CRINGING
TRAITOR!



YOU'RE A COWARD,
STEEL!!



TAKE IT
EASY,
WHITEY!

OH, LET HIM
GO.. IT DOESN'T
BOTHER ME!



BY JOVE!?

IS THAT
OUR HARD-
BOILED
CAPTAIN?

HAS HE
TURNED
YELLOW?



AT MESS, THE MEN ARE
SILENT AND SULLEN...
TIM SENSES THE TENSION
AND LEAVES AT THE
EARLIEST OPPORTUNITY



RED BARTON ALONE REMAINS
FAITHFUL TO HIS COMMANDER.

GAD, HE'S
SUPPOSED
TO BE OUR
LEADER,
BUT...

LET HIM ALONE!
SOMETHING
IS TROUBLING
HIM...

QUITE.. HIS
TROUBLE IS
WITH HIS
BACKBONE!



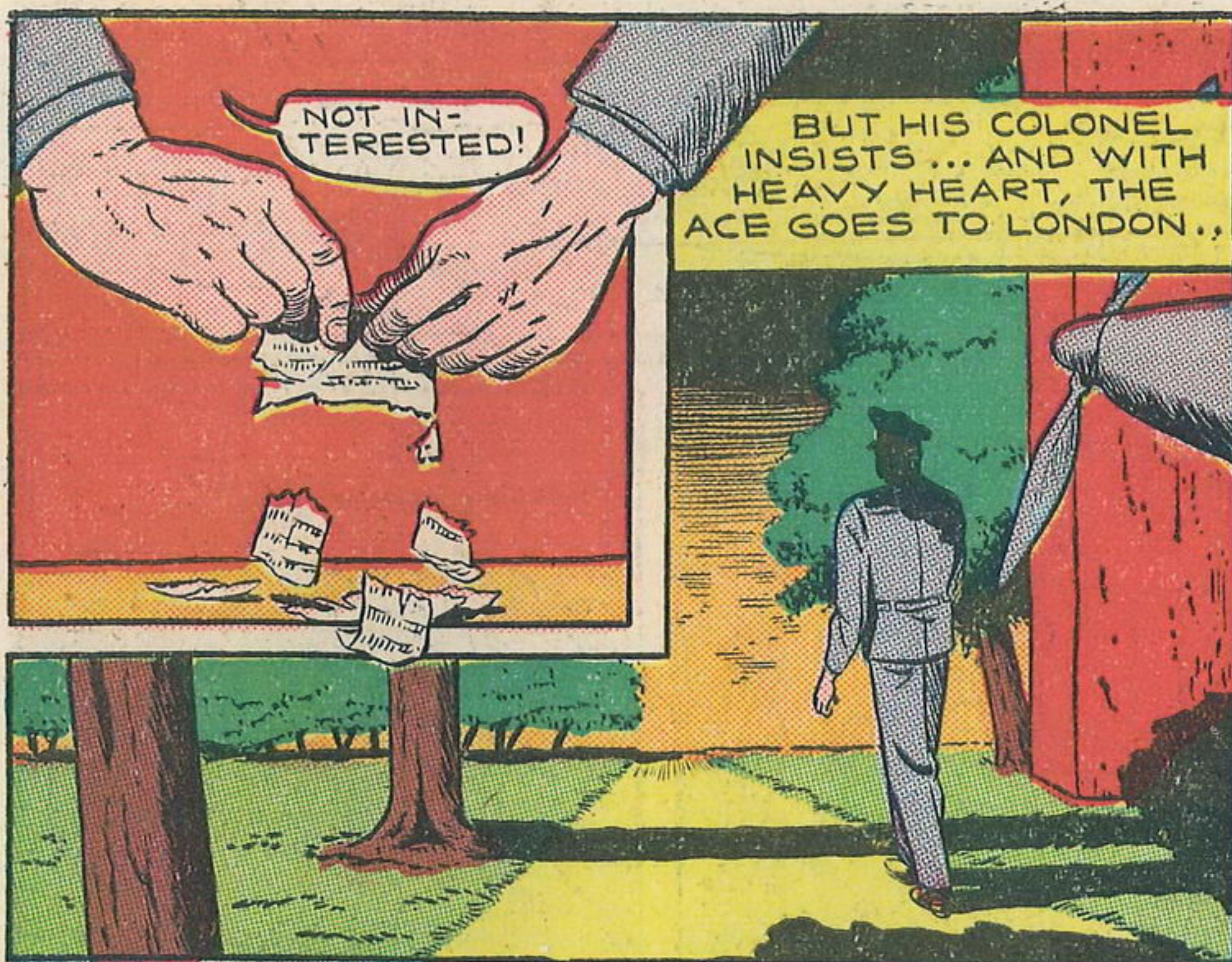
MEANWHILE, THE DOWNCAST
FLIER BROODS OVER THE
MELLOW ENGLISH SUNSET..



HE RETURNS TO FIND
A FURLOUGH NOTICE
ON HIS DESK!

INDEFINITE
LEAVE OF
ABSENCE,
EH?..





BUT HIS COLONEL INSISTS ... AND WITH HEAVY HEART, THE ACE GOES TO LONDON..



ON HIS ARRIVAL, SOME NAZI DORNIERS HAVE BROKEN THROUGH! BLAZE TAKES TO A SHELTER...



HE IS STIRRED BY THE CALM, BRAVE SPIRIT OF THE CITIZENRY.

THERE WILL ALWAYS BE AN ENGLAND



JOVE! THAT BOMB LANDED CLOSE BY!

A HOUSE HAS CAVED IN ONTO OUR SHELTER! THE EXIT IS BLOCKED!!

OH! THE AIR-RAID WARDEN WILL HAVE TO BOMB US OUT!

I CAN MANAGE THAT. WHERE'S THE GRENADES?



ALL RIGHT.. EVERYBODY.. GET BACK AS FAR AS YOU CAN FROM THE DOOR WHILE I TOSS THIS PINEAPPLE AT IT!



LOOK 'ERE! I S'Y, SOME PEOPLE TRAPPED BELOW 'ERE! GIVE AN 'AND!

RESCUE WORKERS GOUGE A TUNNEL THROUGH THE RUBBLE JOYFUL PEOPLE STREAM OUT..



BLAZE WALKS THE STREETS, SURVEYING THE WRECK-AGE OF THE EAST END HOUSES, WHEN THE KING APPEARS...



HIS MAJESTY CONSOLES A BEREAVED MOTHER....



ARE WE DOWN-HEARTED?..

NO!!

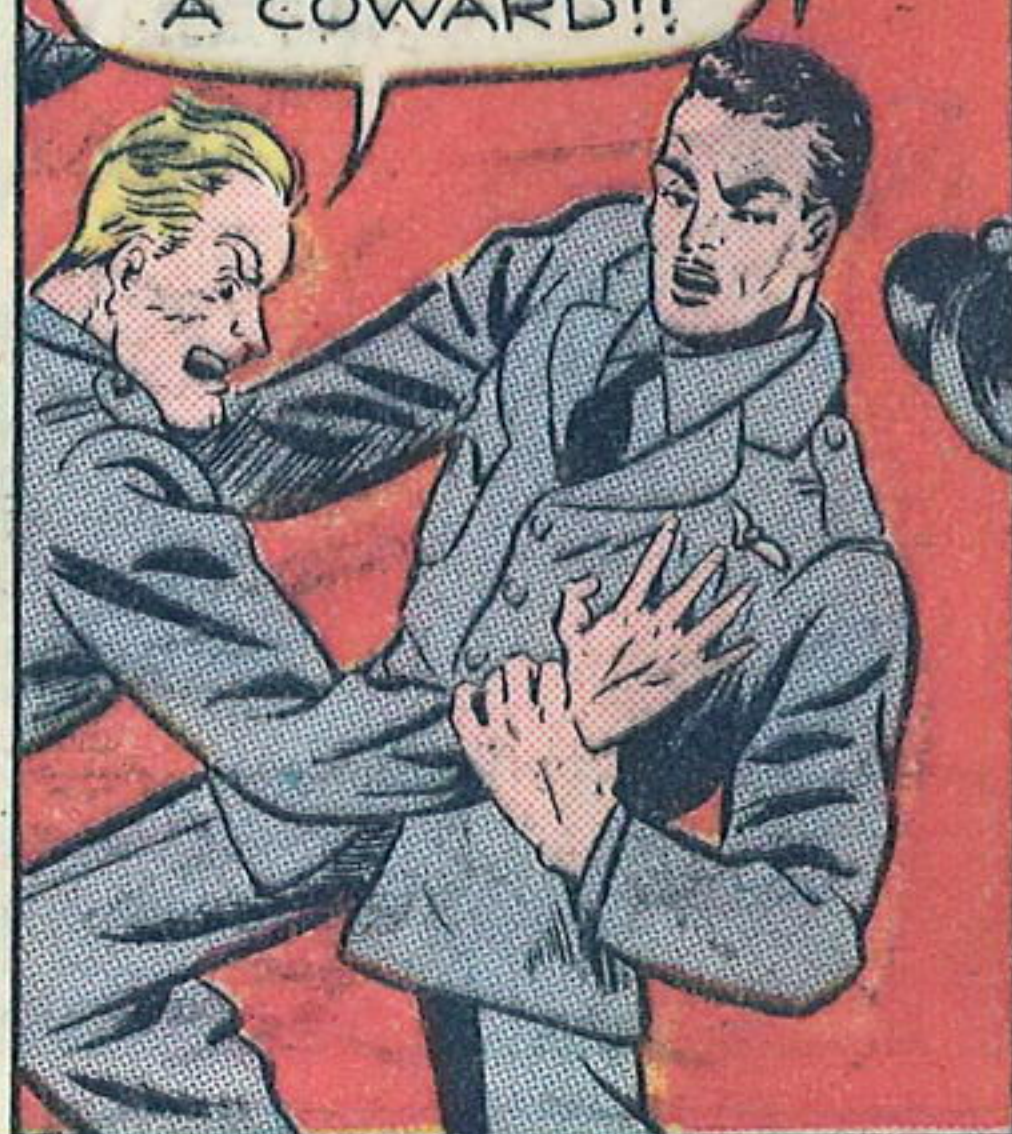


BOLDLY IGNORING HIS FURLOUGH, BLAZE RETURNS TO THE SQUADRON FIELD!



WHAT'RE YOU AFTER, WHITEY?

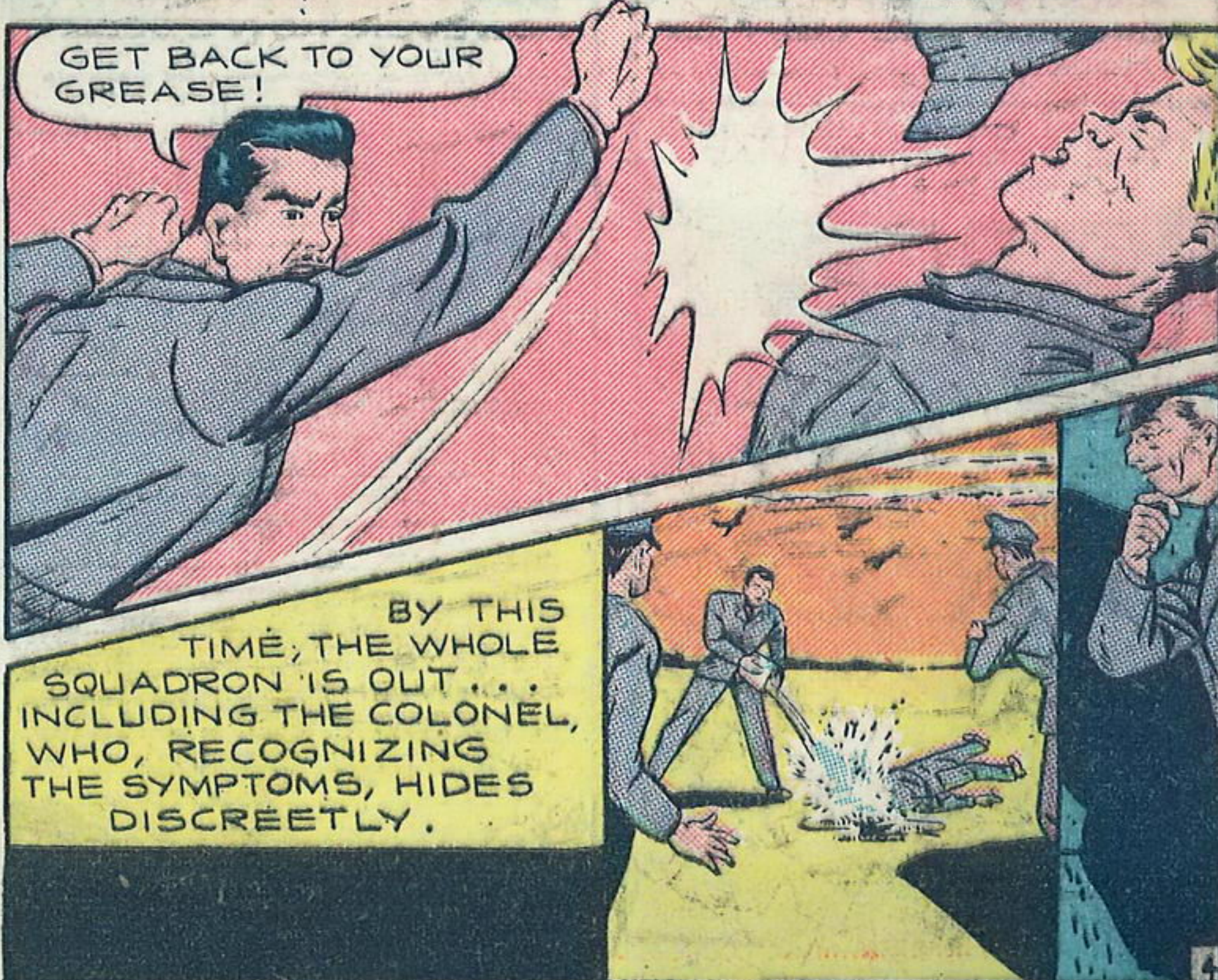
NO WINGS FOR A COWARD!!

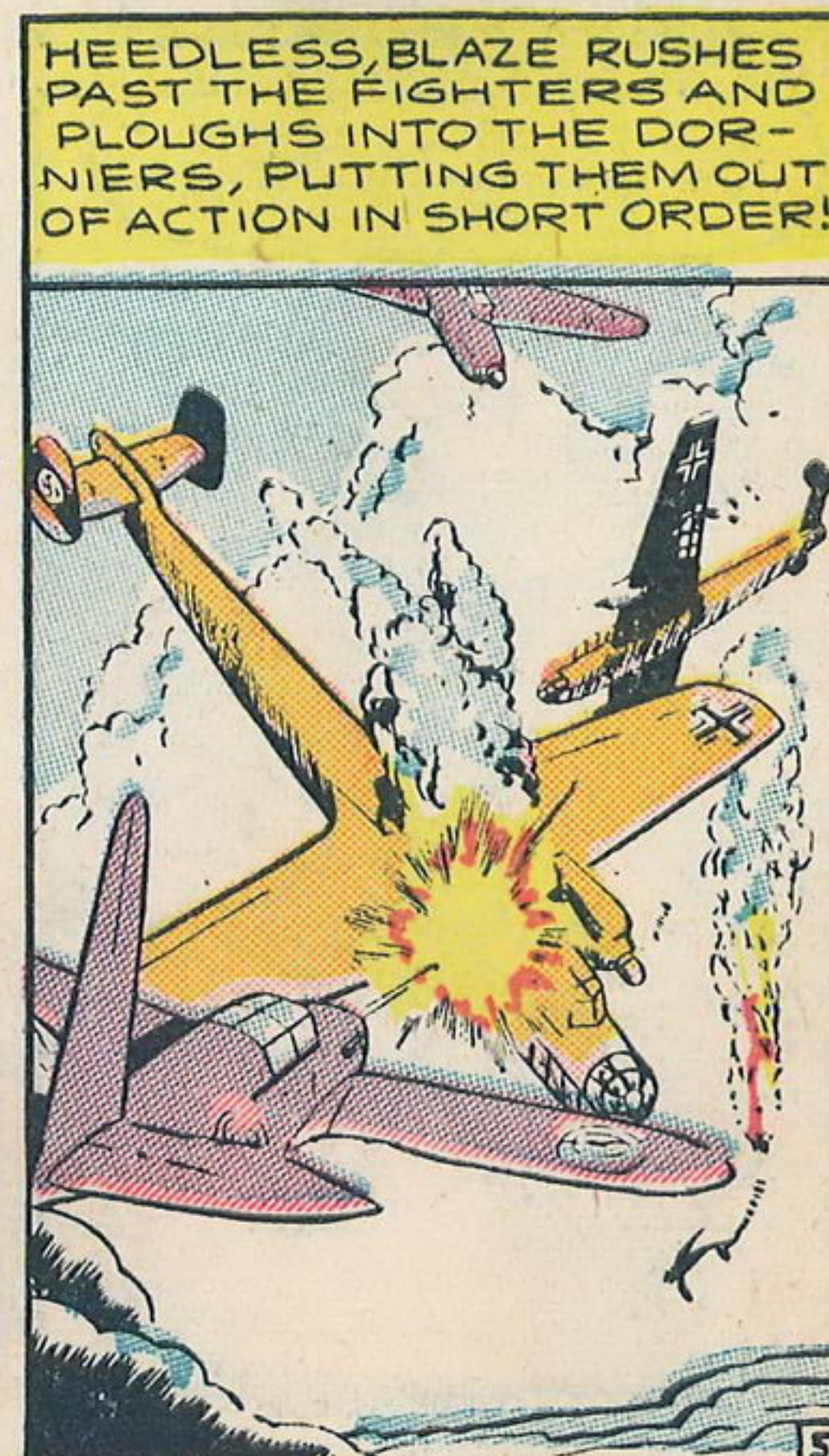
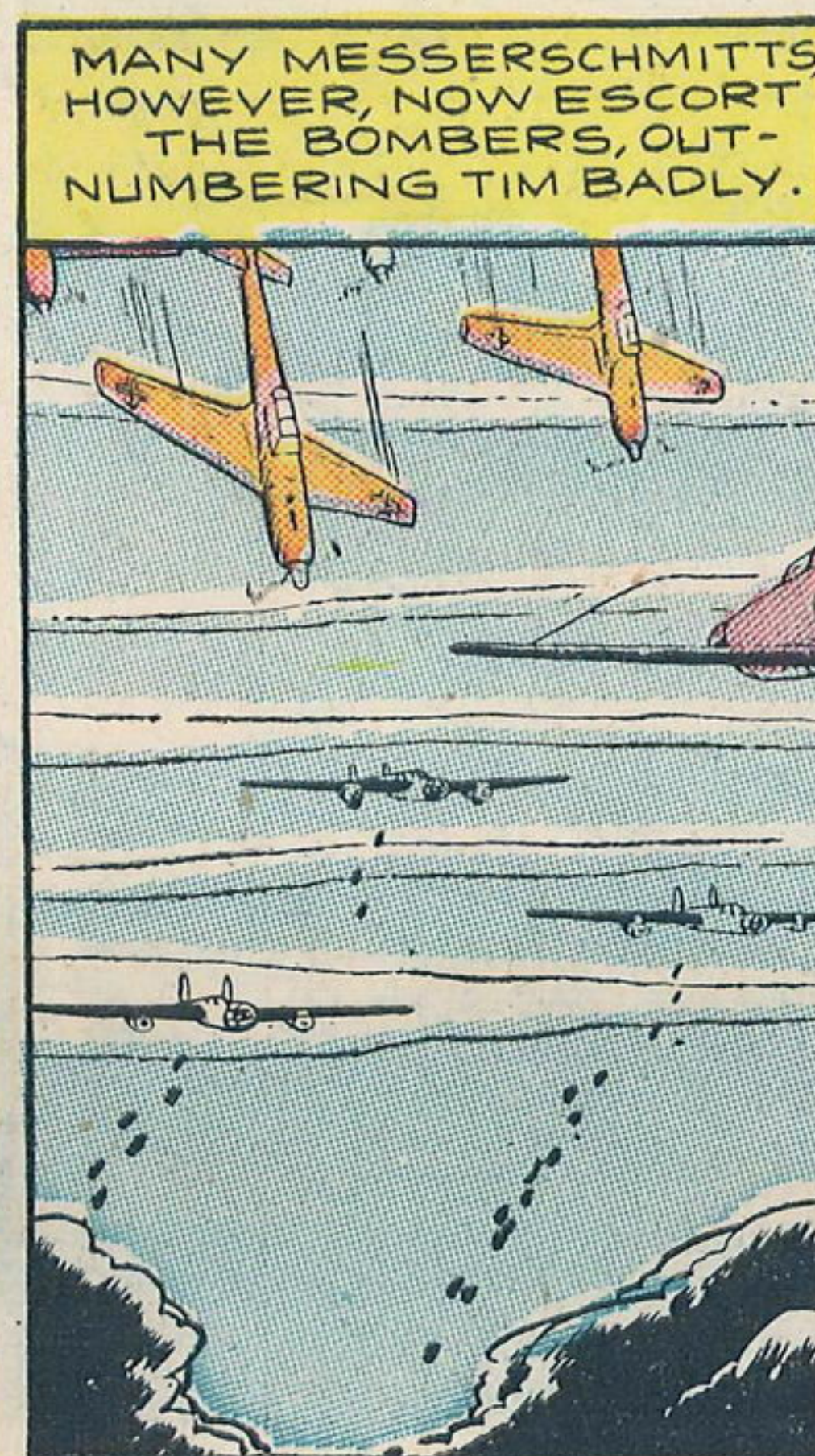
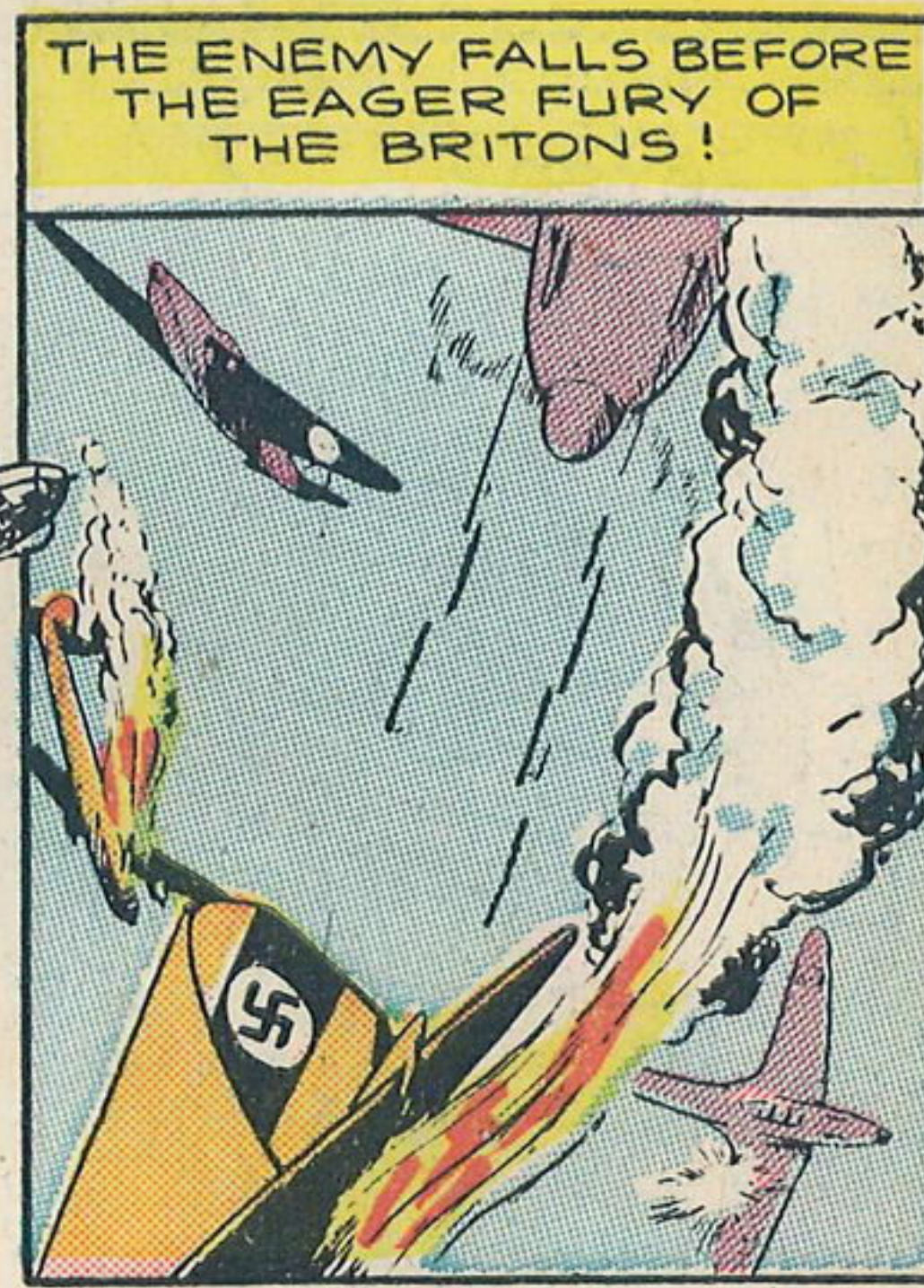
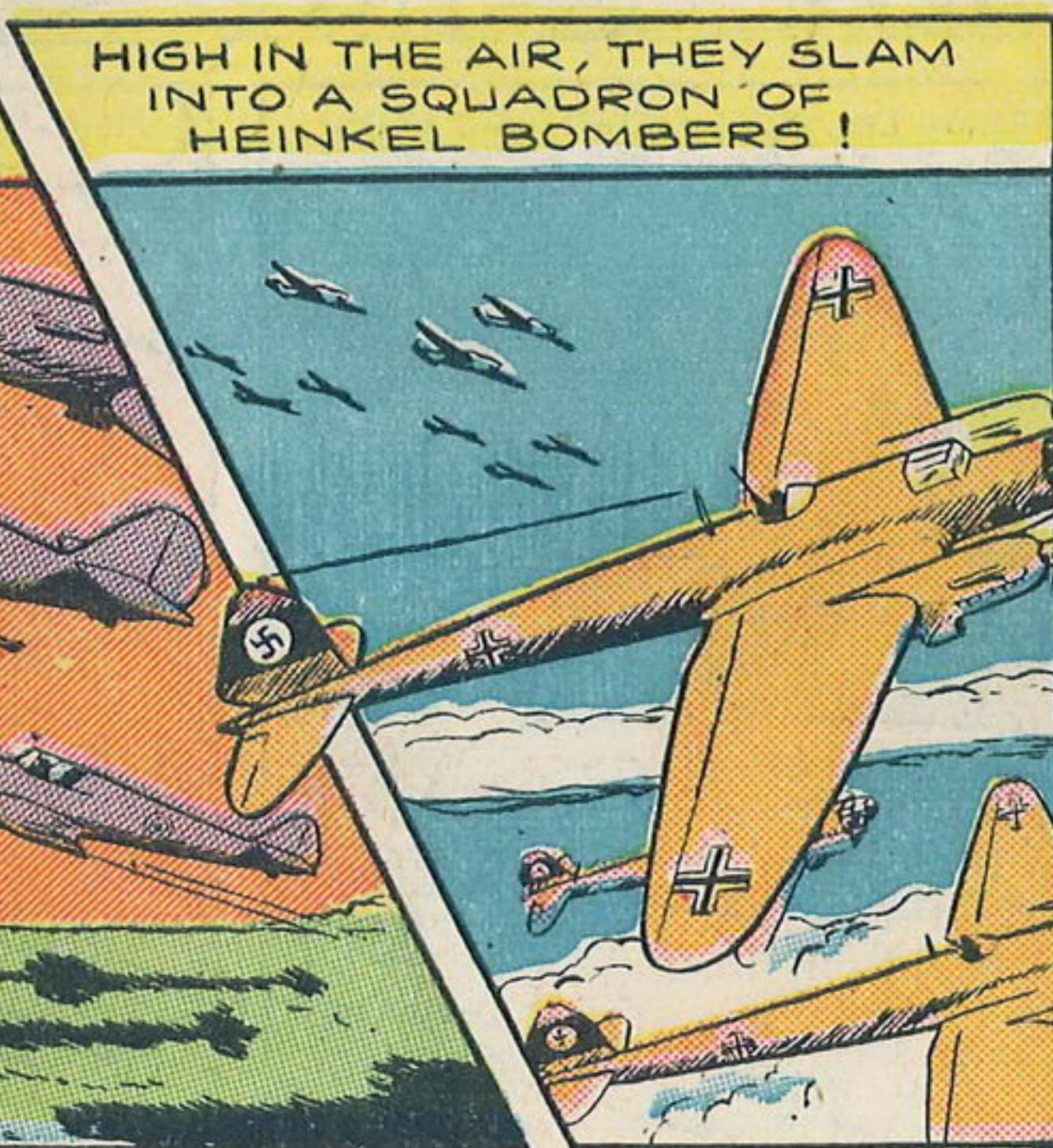
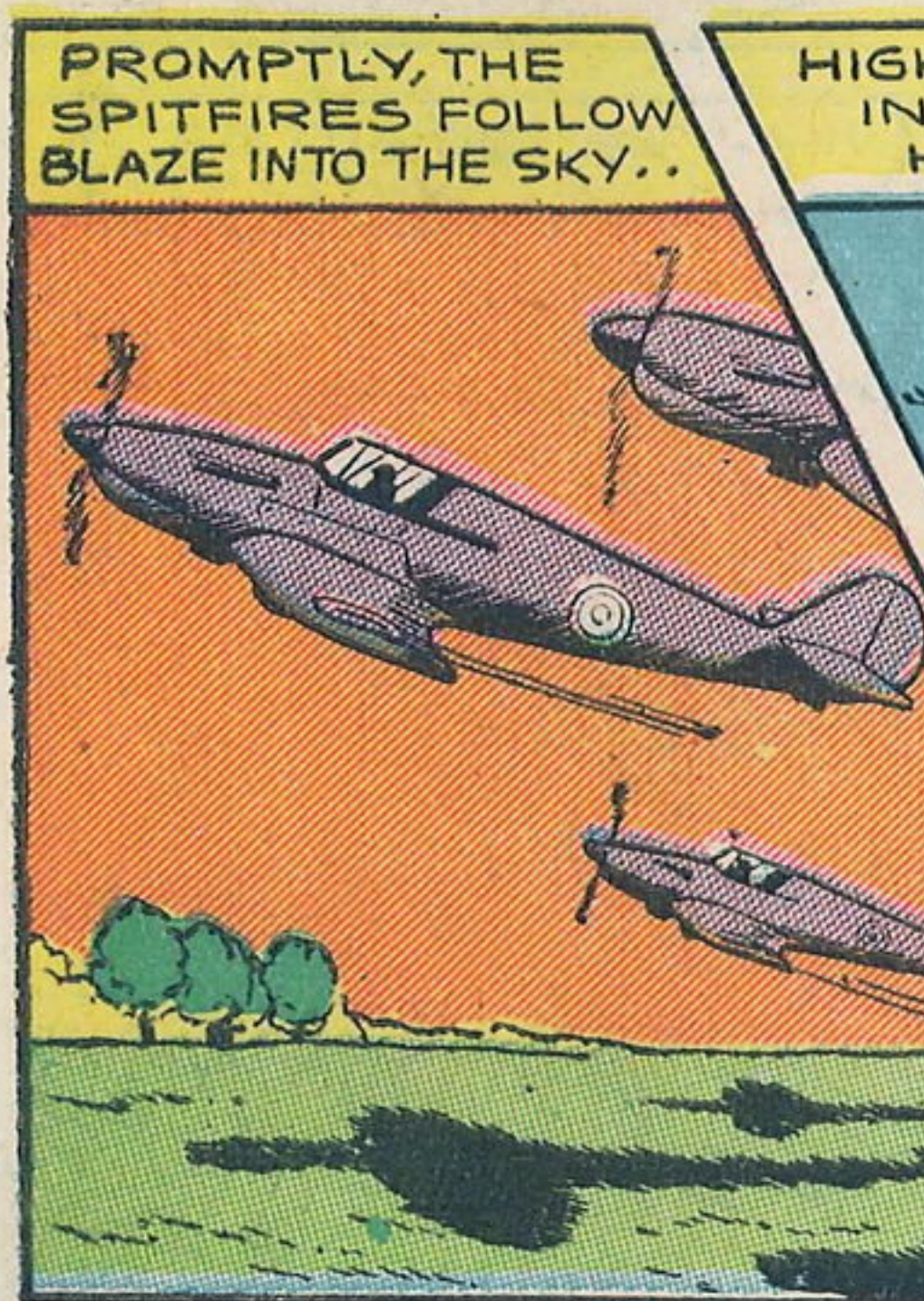
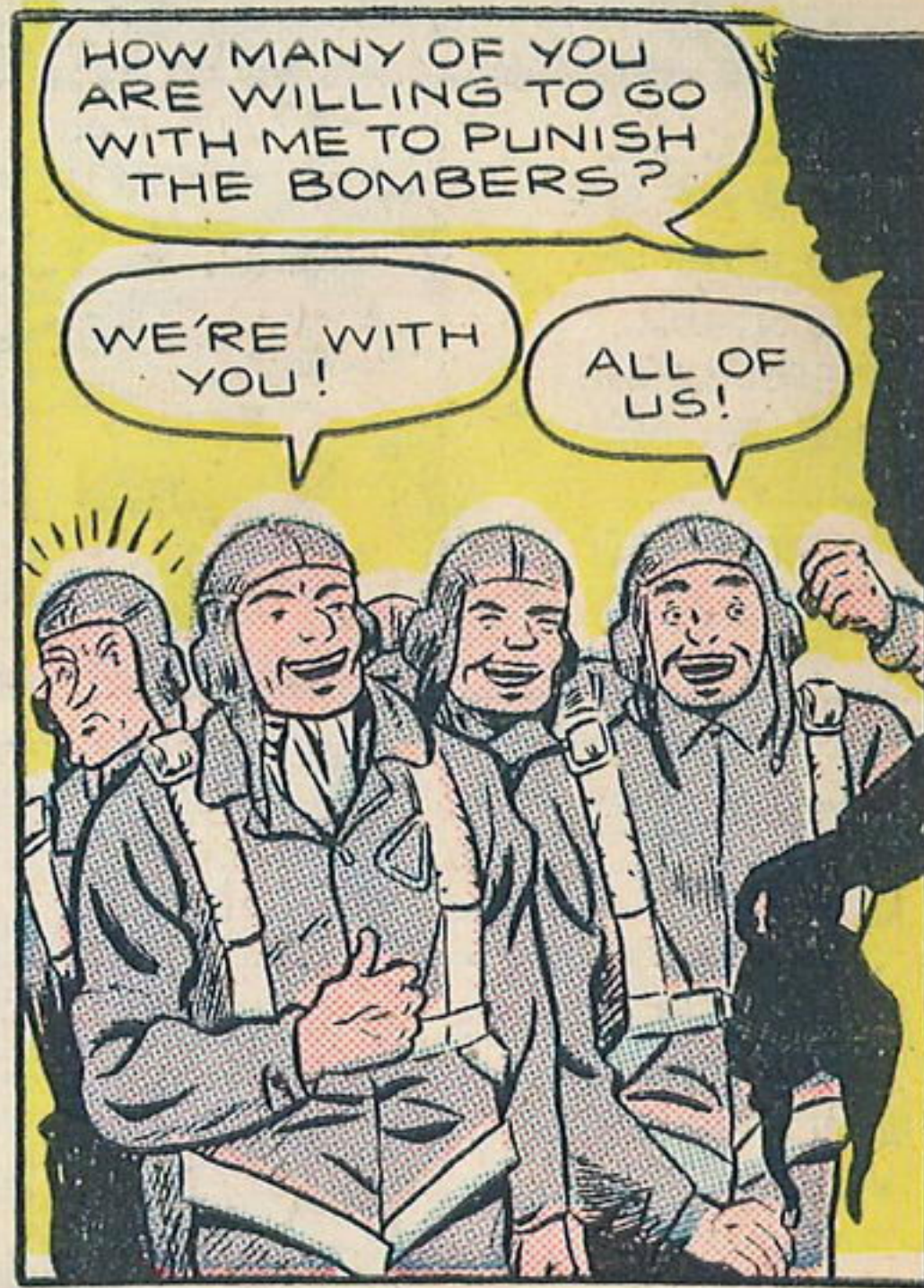
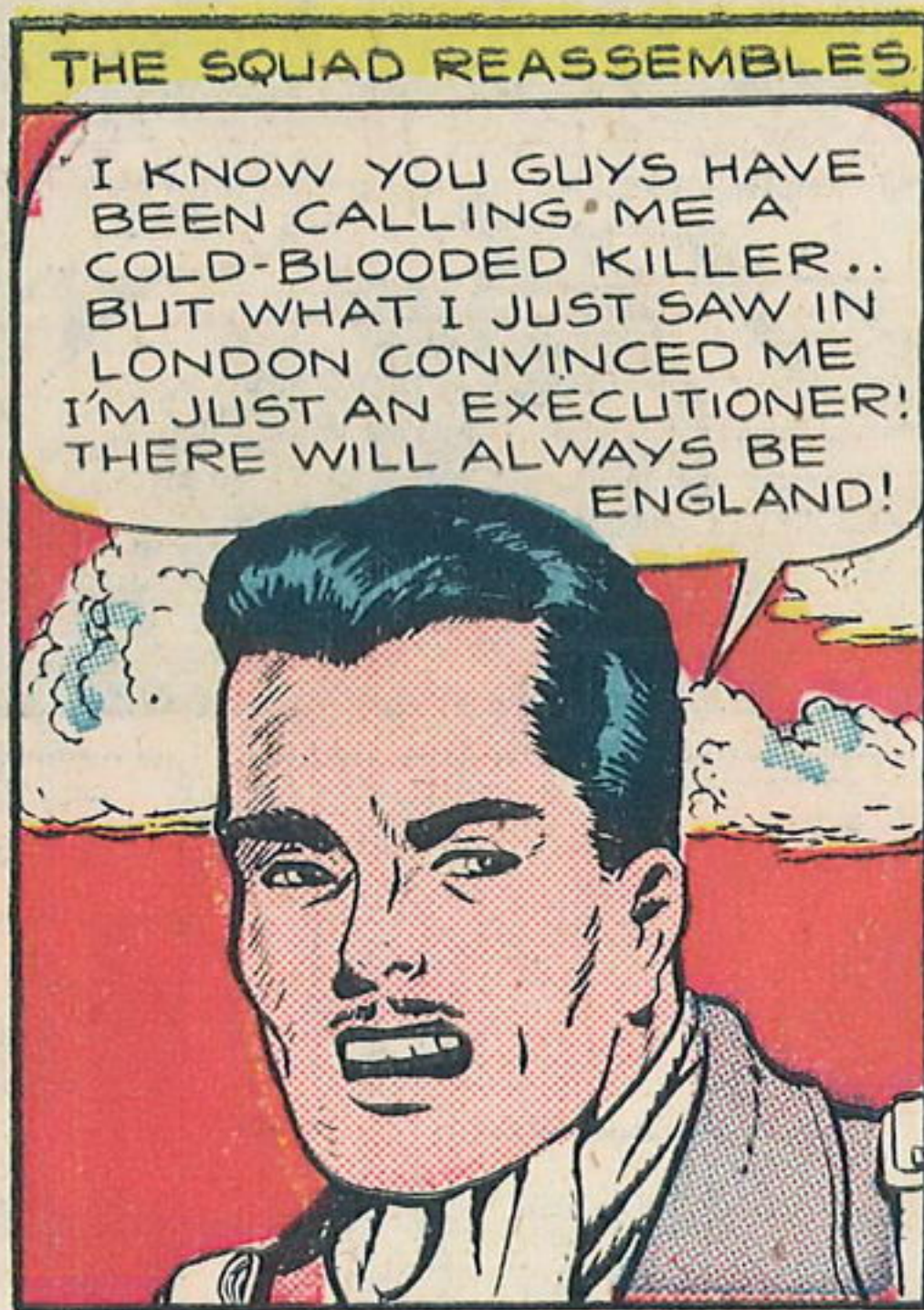


YOU'RE STILL UNDER MY COMMAND, YOU BOOB!

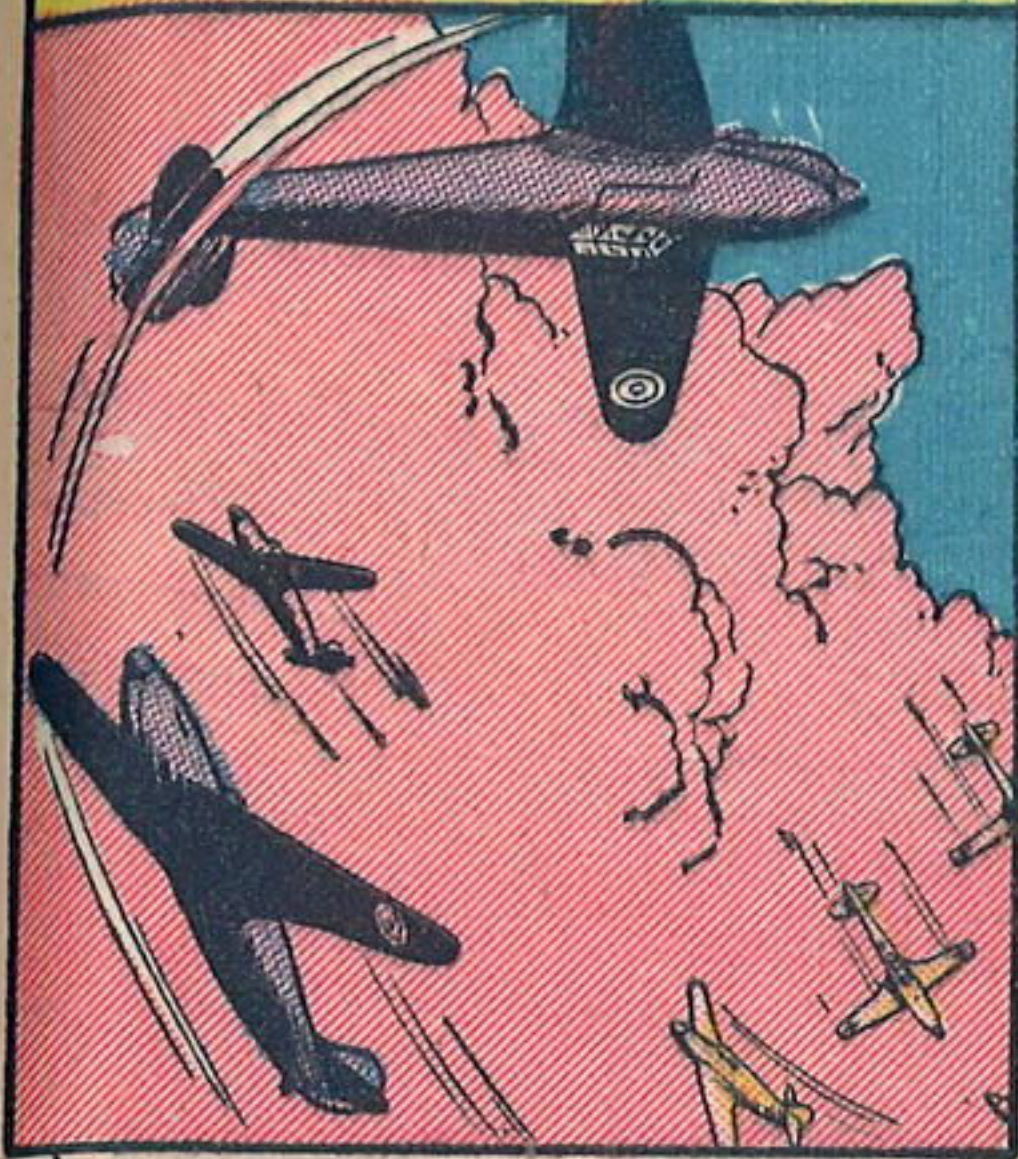


GET BACK TO YOUR GREASE!

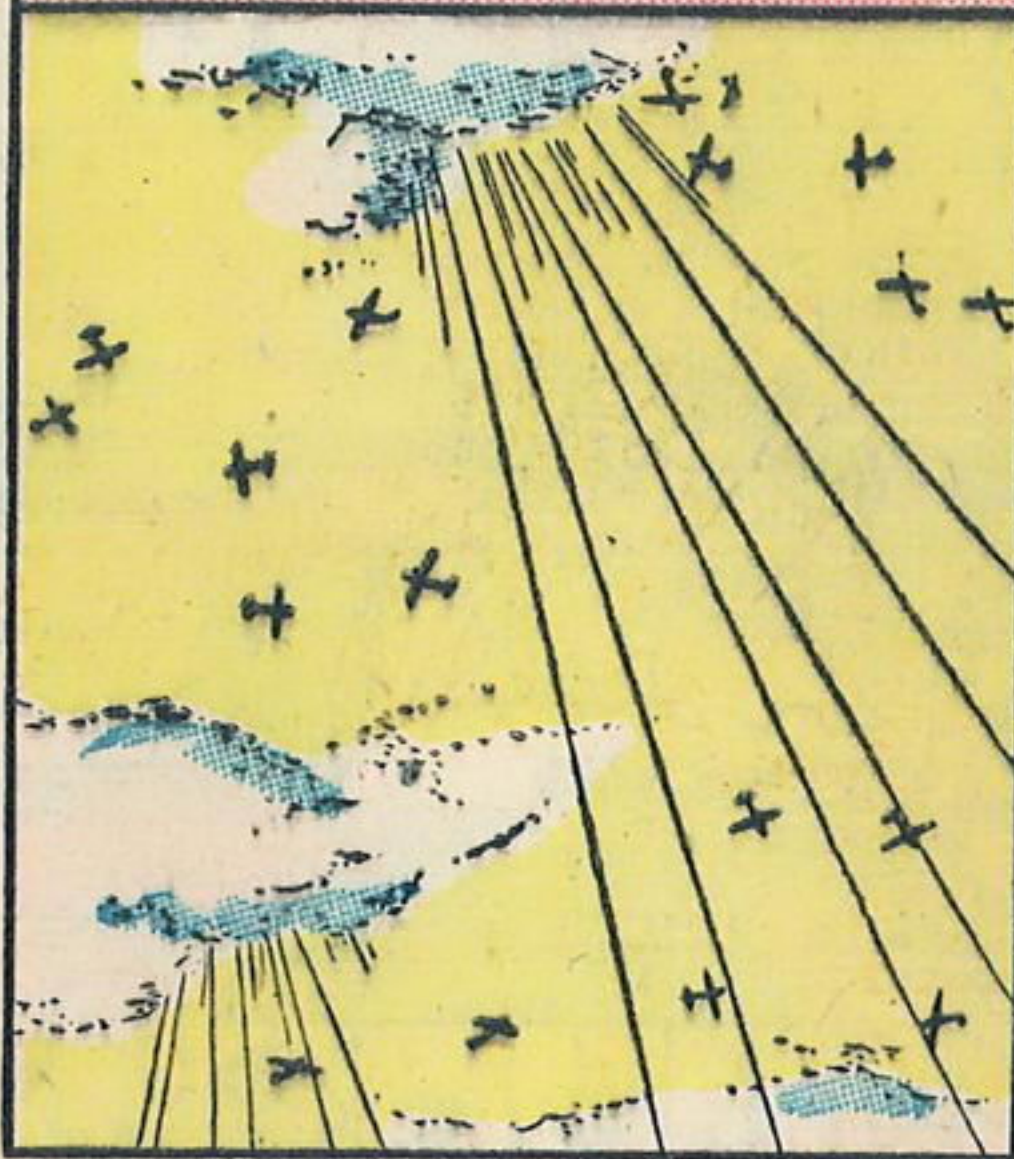




THE MESSERSCHMITTS FALL ON HIS SPITFIRES ... BUT HIS SQUADRON EXECUTES A NEAT LOOP AND HALF-ROLL.



THE NAZIS BREAK INTO FLIGHTS OF THREE EACH; THE BRITISH FOLLOW SUIT. A DOGFIGHT ENSUES!

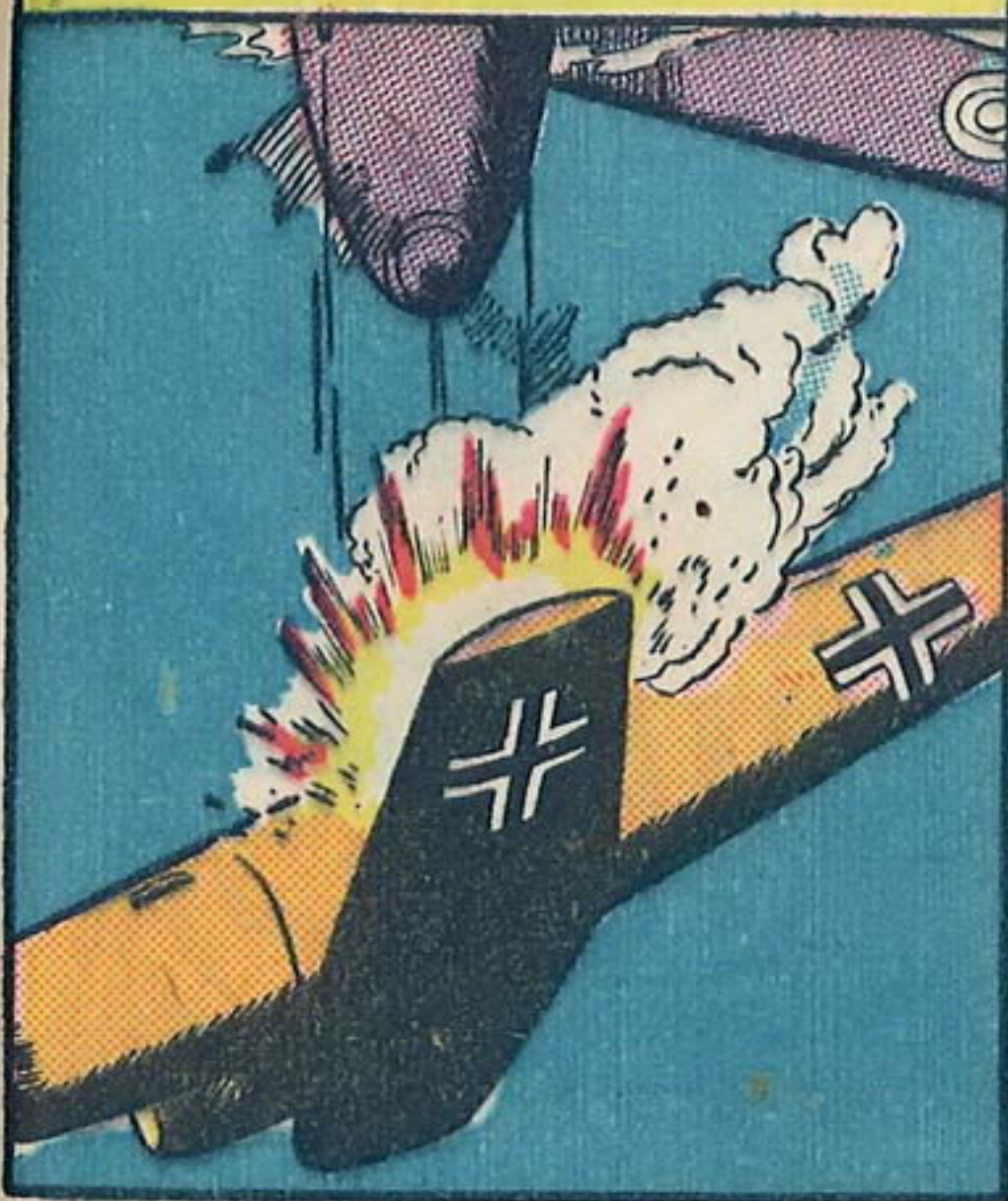


WHITEY! DON'T BREAK FROM YOUR FORMATION! THAT NAZI PLANE ISN'T ALONE! THERE'S TWO ON YOUR TAIL!!

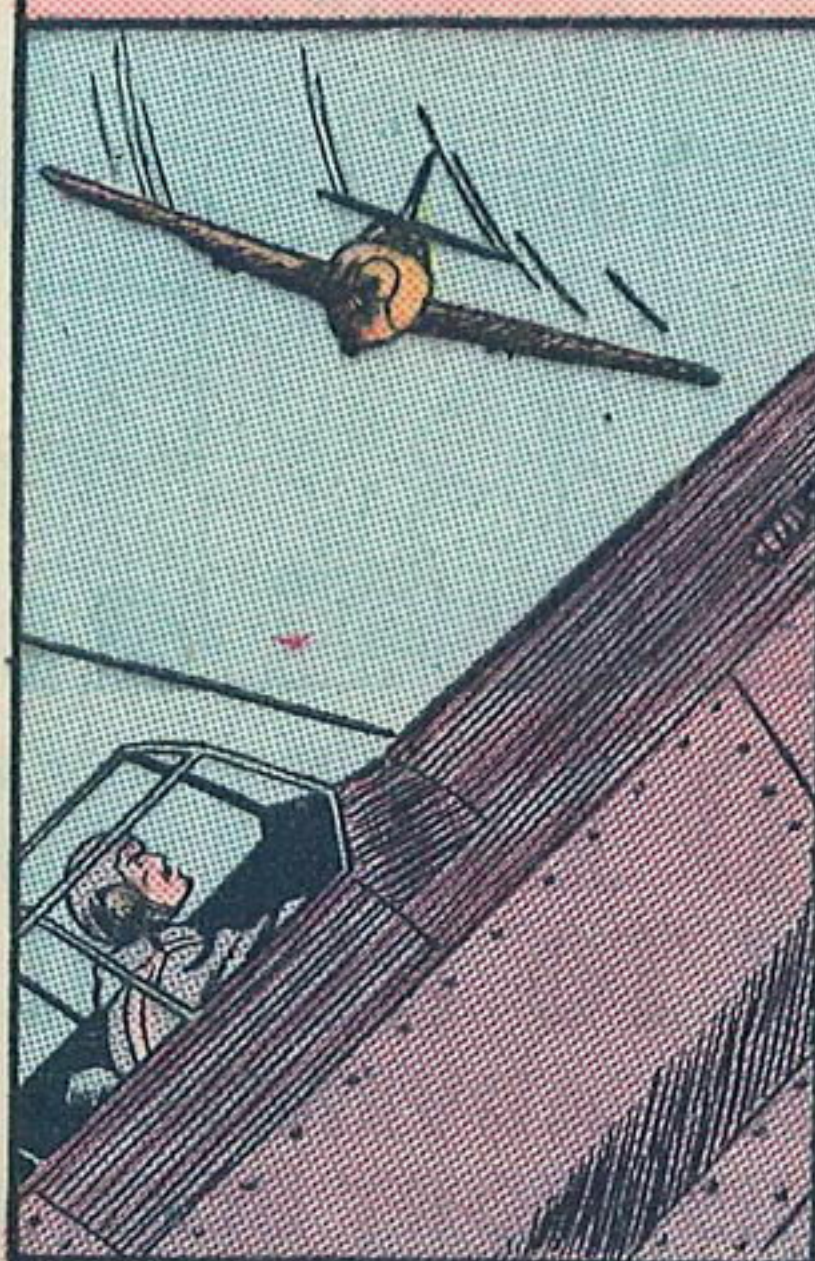
DRAT IT! FLIGHT 1 JOIN FLIGHT 3!!



THE CAPTAIN DARTS TO WHITEY'S RESCUE WITH ALL HIS GUNS BLAZING!



HE ZOOMS AND BAGS THE SECOND MESSERSCHMITT!



PLEASE ACCEPT MY THANKS AND APOLOGIES, CAPTAIN ... WHAT ARE YOUR ORDERS, SIR?

GET ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THIS THIRD FRITZIE!



BACK AT THE AIRPORT:

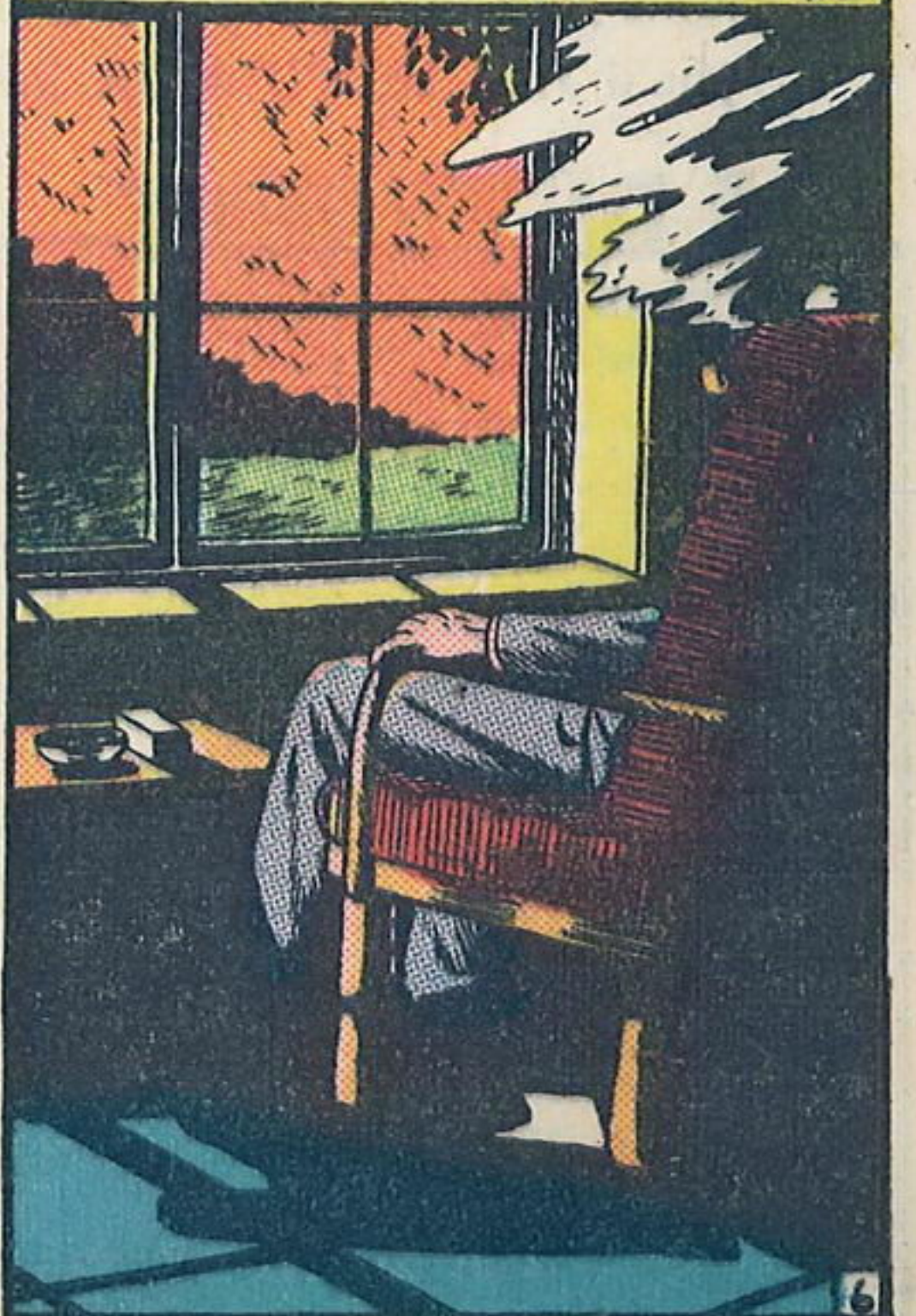
JOVE! WHAT A MAN TO WORK UNDER!

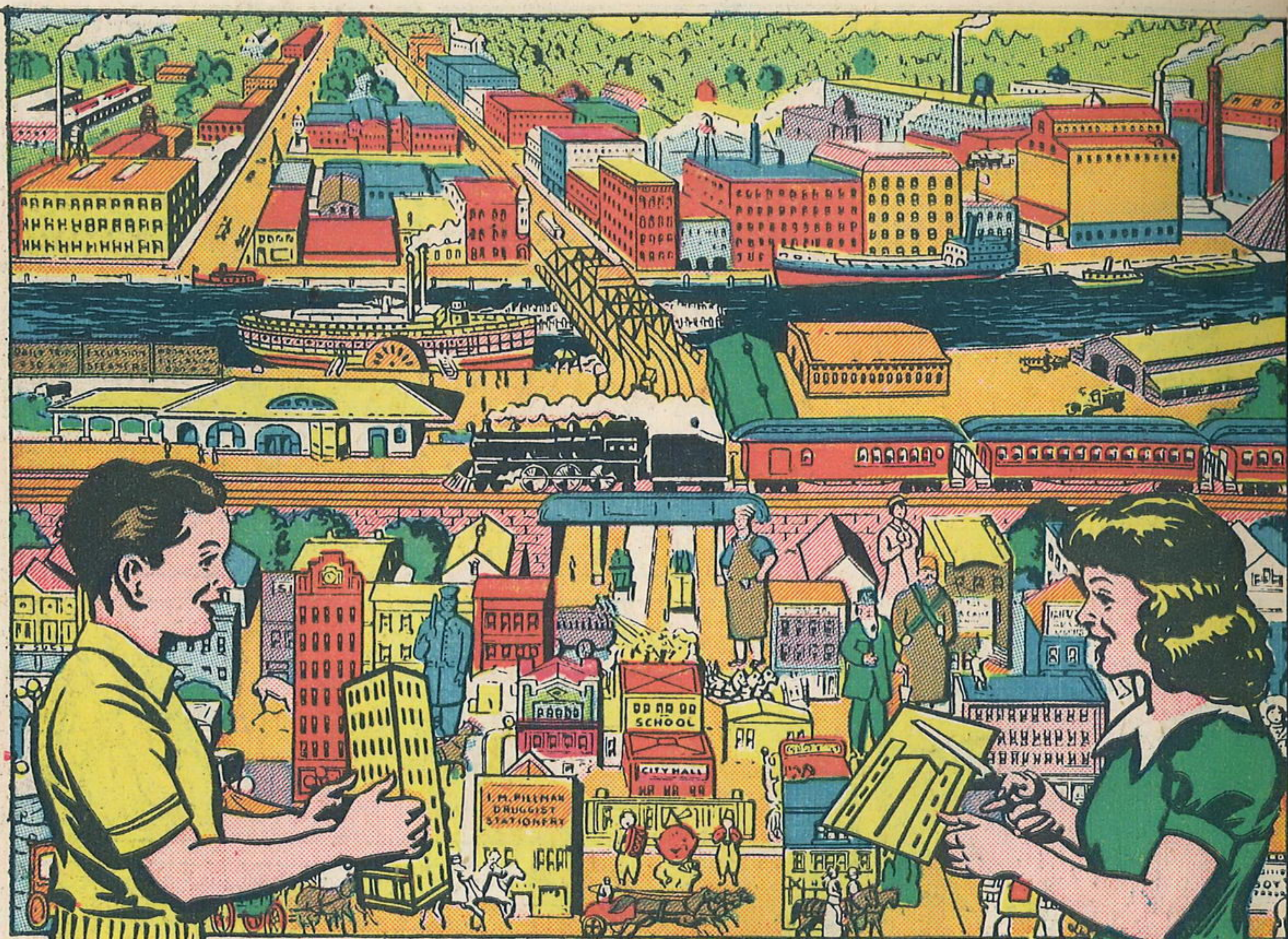
BEST CAPTAIN! IN THE R.A.F.!

WE CAN'T LOSE WITH HIM!...



HAPPY TO HAVE FINALLY WON THE CONFIDENCE OF HIS MEN, CAPTAIN STEEL PLANS GREATER EXPLOITS FOR THE FUTURE.





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Cage
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Garage
Sky Scraper
Woman's
Temple
Clothing
Store
Dry Goods
Store
Bank Bldg.
Furniture
Store
Dept. Store
Grocery
Hotel
Post Office
Hardware
Store
Shoe Store
Lung's
Laundry
Butcher Shop
Drug Store
Bakery

Paint Store

Engine House
Opera House
View of City
Street Plan
Boy
Girl
GIANTS
Police Chief
Fire Chief
Baker
Butcher
Professor
Sailor
Organ
Grinder
Chinaman
Mrs. Dough
Mrs. Bull
CIRCUS
Heralds
Band Wagon
Hippo
Wagon
Lion Wagon
Elephants
Baby
Elephants
Giraffe

Barback
Rider
Cowboy
Camels
Gentleman
Rider
Lady Rider
Chariot
Rider
Zebra
Circus Tent
Pony
Monkey
Rider
Monkey
Monkey
and Dog
Clown
Clown and
Drum
Clown and
Flute
Ticket Office
Lemonade
Stand
Fruit Stand
Balloon
ACCESS-
ORIES
Flower Tubs
Flowers
American
Flag

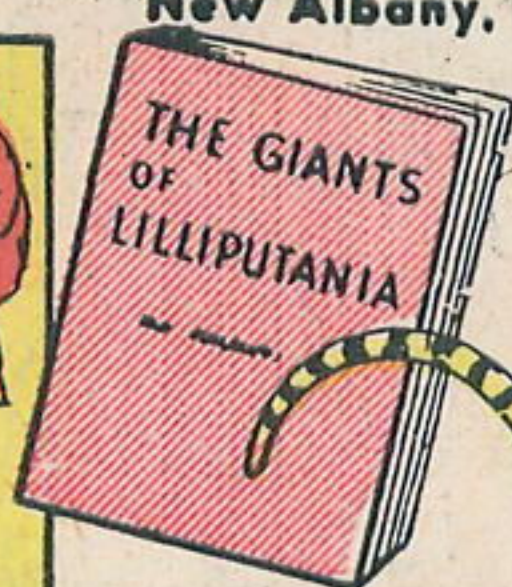


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ID MARRY JIM IF
IT WASN'T FOR THOSE
FILTHY BLACKHEADS
OF HIS

I'LL ASK BOB
TO TALK TO
HIM RIGHT
AWAY

WHY DON'T YOU TRY
VACUTEX FOR THOSE
BLACKHEADS JIM? IT
CERTAINLY HELPED ME

THANKS BOB.
IT SOUNDS
WORTH
TRYING

JIM DARLING,
HOW NICE AND
CLEAN YOU
LOOK!

YOU CAN THANK
VACUTEX
FOR THAT,
HONEY!



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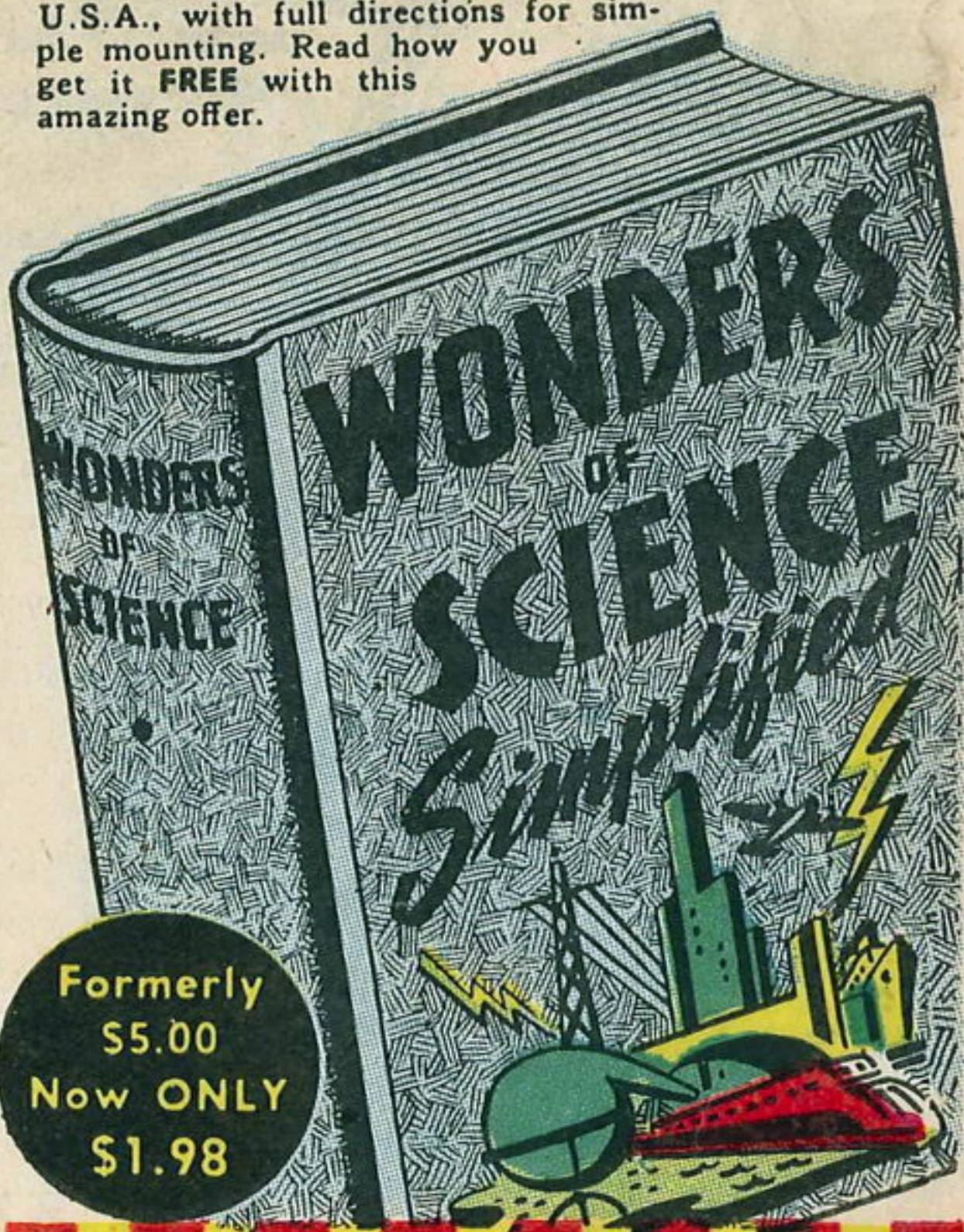
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